

ENHANCING FEDERAL CLIMATE STRATEGIES

Overview: At the federal level we need to expand the ways we address climate change across all policy areas. The Federal Government, from its earliest formation, has played a large role in shaping places - spatially, economically, culturally, racially etc. The built environment and socio-economic systems of the resulting places in turn have varying climate impacts. As federal agencies integrate climate driven policies, those policies must recognize past wrongs to our Black, Indigenous and People of Color (BIPOC) communities and center on climate justice and systemic change. **PLACE Initiative** teaches the importance of urbanism's role as a central and integral piece of the climate change action era and provide contextual solutions and analysis for future climate driven policy.

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EXECUTIVE BRANCH ACTIONS

A. HOUSING

A.1 - DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT (HUD)

BIG PICTURE

In these times of glaring inequality and rampant inflation in housing costs, make the systemic change away from promoting real estate appreciation through tax policy to treating housing as a social good rather than a commodity to be bought and sold for a profit; instead focus on funding housing that promotes security, equity and legacy.

ACTION AGENDA

1. Recognize that making housing into an investment and supporting a huge mortgage industry around it has led to the financialization of housing, which, in turn, has led to the housing crisis and widening wealth gap between BIPOC and White communities we have today. Actively transition the meme about housing from an individual investment to a social good and emphasize housing cooperatives and community land trusts.
2. Because the current tax deduction/tax credit system has never worked well for BIPOC communities and is not working well for most Millennials today, transition federal housing subsidies into seed funding for the development and operation of housing cooperatives that increase access to housing at every price point, including models that solve for maximum affordability, even as our communities continue to grow up rather than out.
3. Enable people to purchase an ownership share in this cooperative public housing. Note: While limited equity co-ops and community land trusts (CLTs) are currently promoted as a solution for low and moderate income people, there is no reason they cannot be promoted for all.
4. Regulate landlords and buyers who own hundreds to thousands of properties, while finding ways to leverage their scale for good, to ensure that renter protections are provided and enforced fairly.
5. Make reparations to those who have been unequally treated by past policy because of their race. Recognize that if the current housing as a commodity paradigm remains unchanged, those focused on home ownership for BIPOC are playing an endless game of catch-up. Most BIPOC populations will continue to struggle to attain the first rung on the ladder re: ownership of residence.
6. Provide funding and policy support for re-writing zoning codes that promote economic exclusion through single-family zoning, in favor of zones that allow for a variety of housing types.
7. Focus on repurposing zoning and building codes to support inclusion rather than exclusion, building walkable low-carbon communities through the natural process of retrofitting and replacing existing buildings and infrastructure within our communities.
8. Support communities that use and produce as little carbon as possible and generate as much renewable energy, local food, local equitable economic support, and carbon sequestration as possible.





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9. Support the planning and funding of resilient communities where water supplies and sewage service are sufficient to support existing demands as well as future growth, and are safe from natural hazards and other risks associated with climate change.
10. Ensure that land use patterns will result in long-term fiscal sustainability for infrastructure and urban systems, and not generate fiscal cliffs after the current batch of politicians and developers are no longer involved.
11. Work with the construction industry to decarbonize it--e.g., address construction waste by standardizing jobsite waste reduction, recycling and material reuse programs. Support shifts to renewable, carbon-free or carbon-sequestering products and construction methods.
12. Support the establishment and maintenance of walkable villages and town centers around which communities are rebuilt to become both more sustainable and more resilient.
13. Rebuild low-income housing over time, into distributed, mixed-income inclusive communities that do not concentrate poverty.
14. Support the development, maintenance, distribution and deployment of open source software to help widely disseminate the essential knowledge needed to create sustainable, equitable, post-carbon communities.
15. Condition funding on having a local (statewide, regional, and local municipal) climate adaptation plan that shows a pathway to achieving carbon emissions reductions in line with national targets and sequestration goals by each interim target year.
16. Focus investment to places that will continue to be viable given the impacts of climate change without the heroic creation of water resources where there is increased drought, and reengineering where there are rising sea levels.
17. Direct investment and services to those places that have underutilized infrastructure and can already manage a significant increase in the number of residents, such as places identified as Welcoming Cities.
18. Find the ways to enable people to be climate migrants instead of climate refugees. Prepare receptor cities for the impacts of climate migration.
19. Develop the strategies for repurposing existing buildings and sites through adaptive reuse to recapture the value that will be lost due to the need to abandon places that will no longer be viable as a result of climate change.
20. Work with EPA and Interior to Include re-wilding strategies that restore lands for carbon sequestration and ecosystem services, e.g., restoring coastal buffer zones to protect inland communities from storm surges and providing groundwater recharge areas that protect communities from flooding while ensuring adequate water supplies during droughts.





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A.2 - DEPARTMENT OF TREASURY

BIG PICTURE

Recognizing the fact that there is no federal agency and its bureaus whose actions have done more to create the housing crisis and gross inequality in BIPOC wealth, work with Congress on systemic change in our tax policy and the huge federal-backed mortgage system and provide the financial tools to support a just transition to complete, equitable, and sustainable communities.

ACTION AGENDA

1. Understand that homeless people will continue to block sidewalks in our cities and towns in ever greater numbers unless we reverse course on tax policy and the huge federal-backed mortgage system.
2. Stop subsidizing mortgage borrowing, property taxes, capital gains, ownership over renting, and the financialized mortgage industry.
3. Recognizing the fact that the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) is the premier source of housing subsidy in the nation--and that subsidy is largely to wealthy white homeowners,¹do a major overhaul of US tax policy.
4. Publish IRS statistics by race and document the full extent of racial bias in our tax system.²
5. Return to a progressive income tax system with no exclusions, a single tax deduction and no reduced or preferential rates such as capital gains. Move the money saved to the HUD budget to help fund permanently affordable limited equity cooperative housing.
6. Establish a tax credit for Black people--as compensation for the historical racism that has resulted in continued downward mobility for today's Black families.
7. In the interim, move towards tax regulatory reform that gives renters equivalent benefits as owners of residential space.
8. Work with HUD to reverse the Low Income Housing Tax Credit as a means of funding basic infrastructure like affordable housing--potentially freeing millions of dollars for governments to fund it directly as we close multiple tax deductions and tax credits.
9. Work with EDA to discontinue the Federal Opportunity Zones program created by the 2017 Tax Cuts and Jobs Act. Put the tax money saved into working with communities to fund development more directly.
10. Support state, regional, and municipal banking efforts that will be critical to providing equitable access to the funding required for equitable urbanism to flourish.Administer a national carbon fee and distribute the associated dividend, in partnership with other relevant agencies, including IRS and EPA.
11. Have the Federal Insurance Office monitor the extent to which traditionally underserved communities and consumers have access to affordable (non-health) insurance products.





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- 12. In monitoring whether certain coastal areas are or should be insurable, give special consideration to BIPOC communities who are often in low-lying urban areas.
- 13. Work to reverse the impact of “redlining” (now illegal but still practiced--albeit more subtly) as it impacts access to insurance.

A.3 - CONSUMER FINANCIAL PROTECTION BUREAU (CFPB)

BIG PICTURE

As the least entrenched and seemingly most progressive of all agencies dealing with housing, lead the way to a system of publicly financed housing cooperatives and help consumers purchase a share

ACTION AGENDA

- 1. Of all federal agencies, CFPB claims to be the one most focused on consumer protection--but it needs to recognize that the housing system that it implements and rules it enforces were developed to promote White homeownership in a system that has never worked well for most Black Americans or other people of color.
- 2. CFPB needs to go beyond enforcing existing anti-discrimination policies to advocating for systemic change in the housing system--as that system no longer works for the majority of the population--BIPOC or White.

- 3. Ensure that all consumers have access to consumer financial products that will lead to systemic change in a system that promotes housing as a commodity rather than a social good.

A.4 - THE FEDERAL HOUSING FINANCE AGENCY (FHFA)

BIG PICTURE

Since FHFA was established by the **Housing and Economic Recovery Act of 2008 (HERA)** to be responsible for the effective supervision, regulation, and housing mission oversight of **Fannie Mae, Freddie Mac (the Enterprises)** and the **Federal Home Loan Bank System**, it must recognize the role of the entities it oversees in creating the commodification and financialization of housing and seek to either transform them or abolish them over the long term.

ACTION AGENDA

- 1. Since 2008, FHFA serves as conservator of Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac, it should take the opportunity to transform the meme of The American Dream away from homeownership.
- 2. As an interim strategy, make 30 year low-interest loans available for other investments in the economy--not just housing.
- 3. As conservator of the FHLB system that includes the 11 Federal Home Loan Banks (FHLBanks) and the Office of Finance ultimately transform the FHLBanks into publicly controlled banks.





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A.5 - DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS (VA)

BIG PICTURE

Focus on supporting our veterans to find opportunities to live and participate meaningfully in 15-minute communities, and to support their equitable and sustainable build-out.

ACTION AGENDA

1. A big focus should be on reducing systemic carbon emissions, such as those created by requiring clients to drive to hospitals for visits. The focus should be shifted to participating in the funding of a national public health infrastructure, one that allows veterans to use the health care providers closest to their home.
2. Once every American has access to guaranteed health care as a right, Veterans will no longer need a separate system, so the VA can focus on distributing its operations in such a way that is most convenient for its aging vets to walk to its locations.
3. The VA can then seek to locate all of its operations in such a way that they occupy distributed footprints rather than centralized ones, and can thus help to play an anchor role in the walkable town centers around which the communities we need must be re-built to become both more sustainable and more resilient.

A.6 - SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION (SEC)

BIG PICTURE

Focus on democratizing access to investment tools, especially those that are supportive of building and operating equitable, sustainable communities.

ACTION AGENDA

1. For residential real estate investment, amend investment rules to provide more opportunities for non-accredited investors to invest in real estate development. Consider whether such investments might be less risky if invested in real estate development and/or housing cooperatives, and work to ensure that regulations allow for investments to be paid back using a variety of methods, including interest, ownership of a home or commercial space that is rented or leased to provide returns, or other methods.
2. Prioritize likely climate change impacts on communities in all economic and risk analyses, with investments prioritized for low-risk communities and for projects that are net-zero and can show their location will be resilient for the life of the structure.

A.7 - FEDERAL RESERVE

BIG PICTURE

Develop incentives that induce small, local banks to prioritize lending for Main Street investments--not just real estate--so that we can have healthy, vibrant communities with strong neighborhood-serving businesses.





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ACTION AGENDA

1. Capitalize the carbon market and raise the price of carbon to ensure that projects that sequester carbon receive sufficient funding to be successful; work with the EPA and other agencies to use price to lower emissions until targets are achieved.
2. Diminish support of the mortgage banking industry- an industry that helps make housing into an investment (a commodity) rather than a social good. Provide support for state, regional, and municipal banks to lend to local green new deal initiatives, to ensure there is always sufficient credit available for capital projects, especially those desperately needed in the near term to enact a just transition within the timeframe specified (now and 2050, with heavy action in early years).
3. Support for a just transition to a post-carbon economy where the fossil fuel and related petrochemical-based economy is wound down, and the human communities involved are centered and given support for an orderly transition to a renewable future.

A.8 - OFFICE OF MANAGEMENT AND BUDGET (OMB)

BIG PICTURE

Ensure that measures of urbanism like walkability, transit, and bicycling/micro-mobility modes are included in screening federal expenditures of every agency to create and sustain walkable communities as a part of a national commitment to living in 15-minute inclusive neighborhoods.

ACTION AGENDA

1. Establish, publish, and maintain carbon indexing standards.
2. Use these indexes to evaluate all federal expenditures, and seek to choose the alternative that produces the least carbon emissions through operations as well as lifetime.
3. Ensure that measures of urbanism are included in the screen used, including walkability, transit, and bicycling / micro-mobility modes, to ensure that every federal expenditure helps to create and sustain walkable communities as a part of a national commitment to living in 1-20 minute inclusive neighborhoods.





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B. WALKABILITY / LIVABILITY

B.1 - DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION (DOT)

BIG PICTURE

Transition to a carbon-free transportation system including walkable 15-minute neighborhoods. Seek to lower VMT by roughly 1/3 nationwide to ensure that demand for energy can be met during the coming transition decades without exceeding our carbon budget.

ACTION AGENDA

1. Work with the White House to craft a declaration of a national Climate Emergency that unlocks the ability to nationalize the rail system, so that taxpayer funds can be used to begin work immediately to electrify all in-service tracks, prioritizing electrification projects within populated areas first, and along tracks upgraded for higher-speed service. Continue upgrading the national system to include high-speed inter-city passenger and freight service, as an emergency measure until all major populated centers are connected. This will be a 50-year project, but major population centers should all be connected within 10 years with electric medium-speed service by upgrading existing tracks. This can be combined with a new Civilian Climate Corps and also used to provide a jobs engine for Build Back Better and Just Transition initiatives; anybody who wants to work will be able to find work converting to the post-carbon economy, including on these rail upgrade projects.

- 2. Re-define parking meters to include electric vehicle charging functionality: Fund the installation of urban on-street curbside electric vehicle charging infrastructure, to support every vehicle being able to park at every curb and plug in to charge using a single national standard.
- 3. Fund the removal of roadway capacity through projects such as freeway removals and urban road redesigns as will be needed to right-size automobile infrastructure for the mode share it will need to support in the future, while creating the infrastructure needed to create and maintain complete walking, bicycling / micro-mobility, local transit, and high speed / national electric passenger and freight rail networks.
 - A. Land reclaimed from freeways and other oversized infrastructure removal in cities can situationally be placed into community land trusts in order to begin to right the wrongs of the past in damaged and disadvantaged communities.
- 4. Support communities to power rail transit with **distributed energy**.
- 5. Support the redevelopment of the types of local mass transit as existed with the trolley lines in 1900 that moved lots of people comfortably and inexpensively, reducing dependency on automobiles. This can include “rubber-tired trolleys.”
- 6. Support the development, maintenance, distribution, and deployment of open source software to help create the communities of the future that we need.





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7. Condition all funding on having a local (statewide, regional, and local municipal) climate adaptation plan that shows a pathway to achieving national carbon emissions reductions and sequestration goals by each interim target year.

B.2 - DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION (ED)

BIG PICTURE

Transition away from credentialism and car-oriented mega-schools to a focus on providing students with education on how to be effective and contributing members of their community, which includes walkable/bikeable neighborhood scale facilities that contribute to the success of individuals and communities.

ACTION AGENDA

1. Seek to locate all of our nation's schools in such a way that they can play an anchor role in the walkable town centers around which the communities we need must be re-built to become both more sustainable and more resilient.
2. Focus on re-tooling American public pre-K-12 education to learn from the decades of lessons of Experiential, Montessori, Waldorf, and other education reform movements. Focus on smaller-group experiences, on the integration of distance with in-person learning, on creating whole humans who are active members in creating and maintaining healthy, inclusive, resilient communities.
3. Focus on encouraging active lifestyles, not just by walking or biking to school, but also through recreational activities that emphasize building lifelong healthy habitats that include sufficient physical activity to maximize health as well as healthy diets that are supported by schools as active participants in local carbon-free food movements.
4. Incorporate nature play into the curriculum of every child; specifically work to provide access to Outdoor School for all children growing up in urban locations; cap the % of educational hours that can be satisfied indoors to ensure every child also engages in nature-based education (with deferrals available when it is unsafe to go outside, of course).
5. Encourage the many forms of knowledge and learning to support the need for trained tradespeople within our economy. Understand that the continuation of education beyond high school should be available to everyone who wants to pursue that education, but make it clear that the things that need to be learned are not limited to an Ivy League curriculum. Respect the fact that people who can do things with their hands and muscles are as primary and as integral to our survival as people who do not need skilled hands or depend on their muscles. For every planner who can help us plot out the transition, we will need 1,000 people who can do the work to make it happen.
6. Help get URBAN DESIGNER into the Standard Occupational Code Manual and work with BLS(Labor), Census, and IRS to get the occupation into the public consciousness. Guidance counselors, teachers and students, especially, must know about this professional option.





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7. Work with indigenous leaders to incorporate native knowledge into local curriculums, to teach decolonization to the next generation.

B.3 - DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY (DHS)

(Including the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE)).

BIG PICTURE

Focus on supporting the resettling of climate migrants and refugees in receiver communities that are walkable, equitable, and inclusive and less prone to the flooding, drought, wildfires, hurricanes, sea level rise and other forces of nature.

ACTION AGENDA

1. FEMA (a federal agency within the U.S Department of Homeland Security) can seek to support the establishment and maintenance of the walkable town centers around which communities must be rebuilt to become both more sustainable and more resilient, including through programs to relocate homes, businesses, and infrastructure out of high-hazard areas (such as flood zones and wildfire risk areas) into rebuilt walkable, mixed-income, inclusive communities with housing surpluses.
2. Be prepared to move one million people from their homes, schools and businesses within 30 days permanently as a result of climate change. Look for the opportunities to relocate industries and communities relatively intact. Find the ways to enable people to be climate migrants instead of climate refugees.
3. Maintain for immediate disaster response needs, a national stockpile of modular homes and tiny communities on wheels and in modules that can be quickly moved into disaster recovery situations; also emergency services pods that can provide carbon-free fuel-independent renewable energy, clean drinking water, temporary mobile cooling centers for heat incident response, and other essential services such as sanitation hook-ups.
4. Condition all funding on having a local (statewide, regional, and local municipal) climate adaptation plan that shows a pathway to achieving national carbon emissions reductions and sequestration goals by each interim target year.
5. Develop the triage methodologies necessary for differentiating between those places that can strengthen themselves to equitably survive the transition, those places that will survive with the investment of precious and limited resources, and those places that will be too costly of those precious, limited resources relative to the benefit gained to justify the investment.
6. Recognize that we are a Nation of migration, seeking the opportunities of new places. As evidenced by our history of ghost towns in the old west, understand that some places will no longer be viable and will need to fade away. The best we can do is to ensure that these places are restored as natural habitats that can sequester carbon while providing ecosystem services, such as buffer areas against storm surge. Possibly pair these habitats with distributed solar and renewable energy generation facilities to take advantage of existing utility hook-ups.





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7. Understand that some of those places, as evidenced by the area that we used to call the “Rust Belt” but now are reidentifying as the “Lake Belt, will be recycled through adaptive reuse to be opportunities in the future as the climate continues to change.

B.4 - DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES (HHS)

BIG PICTURE

Prioritize a transition to healthier communities that facilitate walking, biking, and transit for most daily trips through understanding how the design of the built environment creates automobile-dependent sedentary lifestyle that produces obesity and other negative health impacts.

ACTION AGENDA

1. Seek to locate all HHS operations in such a way that they occupy and support operations with distributed footprints rather than centralized ones, and thus help to play an anchor role in the walkable town centers around which the communities we need must be re-built to become both more sustainable and more resilient.
2. As evidenced by the roll out of COVID vaccinations, understand the value of a system that utilizes subsidiarity. Allow decisions to be made and programs administered at the lowest competent level.





C. ENVIRONMENT & RURAL

C.1 - ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY (EPA)

BIG PICTURE

Focus on regulating carbon and supporting the transition to a carbon-free economy, while supporting the development of 15-minute communities that are equitable, sustainable, and healthy. Ensure that all parts of society--communities, individuals, businesses, and state, local and tribal governments--have access to tools to effectively participate in managing human health and environmental risks to their air, land and water.

ACTION AGENDA

1. Focus on regulating carbon and supporting the transition to a carbon-free economy, while supporting the development of 15-minute communities that are equitable, sustainable, and healthy.
2. Aggressively support the phase out of petroleum-based plastics that are more and more visible on the streets of our cities with the worst housing crisis/homelessness.
3. Work to reverse the fact that people of color bear a disproportionate burden of the health impacts of plastic production and disposal. (Petrochemical plants are nearly always located in low-income communities and communities of color, churning out toxic air and leaching toxics into the soil and water, resulting in clusters of cancer and other chronic diseases.³
4. Work with Congress to ultimately dis-allow construction of any new plastic infrastructure, starting with the “**Break Free From Plastic Pollution Act of 2021**”.
5. Enact more water pollution regulations and provide tools to see that the nation has no more lead in drinking water events, such as the tragedy in Flint, MI.
6. Mandate a shift to 100% renewable fuels by 2035, with heavy phasing in from 2025 to 2030, with specific policies and targets for biodiesel, renewable diesel, hydrogen, ethanol, butanol, and others, while working with the Department of Agriculture to ensure that this transition occurs simultaneously with a shift away from fossil-fuel-intensive crop cultivation towards agricultural practices that do not require fossil fuel inputs and therefore sequester more carbon than they emit.
7. A speed-up of urban cleanup efforts, with a focus on cleaning up ASAP to the maximum standard possible, then seeking to recover funds later (rather than the current fund-first, fix-later approach), and a focus on high-value properties, such as urban waterfronts, that could become key ingredients to the carbon-free economy of the future.
8. Focus on decarbonizing the construction industry, including by addressing construction waste by standardizing jobsite waste reduction, recycling and material re-use programs, as well as supporting shifts to renewable, carbon-free or carbon-sequestering products and construction methods.





C.2 - DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE (USDA)

BIG PICTURE

Focus on transitioning rural communities away from petroleum-intensive practices, and towards activities that sequester carbon and allow for rural life within small walkable communities, rather than requiring rural residents to live an auto-dependent lifestyle.

ACTION AGENDA

1. For annual / row crop and grazing land, focus on supporting **carbon-farming**: a transition away from the use of fossil fuel inputs to agriculture, instead pivoting to becoming a net carbon sink that sequesters much more carbon than is emitted, annually and cumulatively while maximizing ecosystem services and habitat restoration.
2. Focus on supporting rural generational transition from the current private landholding model, to an inclusive and diverse model that supports small, local land stewardship through farming and land management trusts operated by farming and land management cooperatives.
3. Encourage and support a transition to a village model in farm worker housing, that creates/restores small 15-minute walkable communities rather than requiring workers to commute from distant settlements due to the lack of adequately-sited rural villages.
4. Support programs to create resilient food systems that include food produced locally such as in community gardens, small farms and orchards located within metropolitan areas, victory gardens, and vertical farms powered by clean energy.
5. Create policies and incentives that encourage farmers to generate renewable energy, such as solar, wind and biomass on their agricultural lands. Renewable energy sources can coexist with on-going agricultural production and the energy can be used by farmers in their agricultural operations and excess production can be sold as supplemental income.
6. The Department of Agriculture can seek to locate all of its operations in such a way that they occupy and support operations with distributed footprints rather than centralized ones, and can thus help to play an anchor role in the walkable town centers around which the communities we need must be re-built to become both more sustainable and more resilient.
7. Move US Forest Service from USDA to DOI. Meanwhile all forest logging on USFS land should use practices so that those logs are certifiable by the **Forest Stewardship Council**.





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C.3 - DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR (DOI)

(Including National Park Service Preservation Office (NPS))

BIG PICTURE

Focus on working with nature in sequestering carbon, restoring habitat, and working with Native Americans to provide justice for past harms and an equitable path forward. NPS PO must also develop and enforce race and equity criteria re: historic preservation.

ACTION AGENDA

1. All of the land and water managed by DOI should be managed with the goal that every acre be managed to restore and support its short, medium, and long range **carbon sequestration** capability.
2. Move USFS to DOI and manage its urban land projects as well as those of NPS to bring greater equity and walkability to communities of color.
3. Manage forest lands currently under USFS to support our National Parks as centers for habitat conservation, acting as nodes on a network of wildlife corridors and ranges, rather than leave Parks as islands in a sea of clearcuts (e.g. Mt Rainier).
4. Manage USFS lands to achieve Forest Stewardship Council certification.

5. Prioritize the creation and maintenance of habitat corridors to facilitate wildlife migration patterns and trails to support human recreation, including new through-hiking trails to connect wilderness and habitat conservation areas, to allow freedom of movement during an age of increasing climate impacts.
6. Center the role of first peoples as stewards of the land, and provide support as requested.
7. Condition all funding on having a local (statewide, regional, and local municipal) climate adaptation plan that shows a pathway to achieving national carbon emissions reductions and sequestration goals by each interim target year.

NPS (National Park Service Preservation Office)

8. NPS must reconsider **National Register review process**⁴ to take into account a broader scope of values. Include the accomplishments of historically excluded BIPOC communities and the role the submission under review may have played or continue to play in excluding BIPOC communities.⁵
9. Model reforms to the NPS process on efforts like Portland, OR's **Historic Resource Code Project (HRCP)**.





ENHANCING FEDERAL CLIMATE STRATEGIES

C.4 - DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY (DOE)

BIG PICTURE

Focus on transitioning the grid from a centralized, largely fossil-fuel powered supplier of energy from producers to consumers, to a distributed system wholly reliant on renewable power with built-in redundancy that is resilient to the myriad threats posed to it by climate change, and is fully supportive of every location with a meter potentially consuming, producing, and storing energy.

ACTION AGENDA

1. Focus on supporting solar, wind, and power generation and storage technology deployment in every building and community nationwide.
2. Create policies that decarbonize energy sources that feed the grid, moving from large fossil fuel plant generation, to large-scale clean generation such as wind and solar farms.
3. Encourage distributed resilient energy system options such as combined heat and power, community energy systems, and microgrids that can be grid-tied, but can also run when the grid is down to provide for distributed community energy resiliency.
4. Re-define parking meters to include electric vehicle charging functionality: Fund the installation of urban on-street curbside electric vehicle charging infrastructure, to support every vehicle being able to park at every curb and plug in to charge using a single national standard.
5. Support developing stronger plans and programs to prevent nuclear accidents that impact multiple communities.
6. If research shows they can be cost-competitive with wind, solar, tidal, and other renewable energy sources, then help develop the development of self-contained nuclear generators scaled to serve local grids, reducing the energy lost in long distance transmission; otherwise, shift resources away from nuclear towards proven cost-effective renewable energy generation technologies. Ensure, however, that cost-efficiency is viewed as the total cost to deliver a kilowatt-hour of energy every hour and every day, including the costs associated with storage and transmission as well as generation.
7. Help develop small scaled helical wind generators that can be mounted on single family homes that can be driven by lower wind speeds, including the updraft from a roof on a sunny day.
8. Help develop generators that can be driven by tidal and river currents without risking injury to fish or marine mammals. The Hudson River is an estuary with a tidal flow below the New York Bridge capable of powering the New York Metropolitan Region.
9. Fund research into nationalizing the electrical grid to determine if this is the most cost-effective path forward to provide for a resilient and redundant grid that support renewable power consumption, generation, and storage at every meter
10. A clean fuels rule that mandates a shift to 100% renewable fuels by 2035, with heavy phasing in from 2025 to 2030, with specific policies and targets for biodiesel, renewable diesel, hydrogen, ethanol, butanol, and others.





D. ECONOMIC

D.1 - DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

(Including National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), National Weather Service (NWS), and U.S. Census Bureau)

BIG PICTURE

Considering its role in data collection and management via NOAA, NWS, US Census and other bureaus and its role in fostering innovation by setting standards and conducting foundational research and development, Commerce should undertake initiatives to communicate and warn about the dangers of climate change, increase equity, and support the transition to carbon-free communities.

ACTION AGENDA

Department of Commerce

1. Establish a carbon tracking system that models and tracks the generation, use, and sequestration of carbon across all sectors of the economy, for benchmarking and financial purposes.
2. Support creating systems of neighborhood food co-ops, to ensure that local food can be provided to help create 15-minute neighborhoods in villages, towns, and city neighborhoods across America, even when doing so is not supportable with a profit-dependent business model, and to better support local food initiatives that can reduce the carbon intensity of the supply chain.

3. Support the development, maintenance, distribution, and deployment of open source software and data to help ensure that the latest capabilities are as widely distributed as possible and can be advanced by different actors to create the communities of the future that we need.
4. Encourage skilled labor as the equal of what is often considered professional level and support fairness in the way workers are compensated. How much should someone sitting at a merger meeting be paid for taking notes in a comfortable environment with constant pleasure perks compared to what someone with the skills to repair a broken sewer main be paid?
5. Add URBAN DESIGNER to the Standard Occupational Code Manual and work with BLS(Labor), Census, IRS and Education to get the occupation into the public consciousness. Students, especially, must know about this professional option.

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) & National Weather Service (NWS)

6. Undertake a communications and education strategy to broadly share information about forecasted climate impacts on human life, Earth's natural resources, and economic vitality.
7. Make NOAA's research easily accessible to the public.





ENHANCING FEDERAL CLIMATE STRATEGIES

- 8. Use federal drone fleets to conduct seasonal national aerial 10-band multispectral photography / remote sensing, in order to support carbon geo-accounting, disaster response, and other climate-related actions.
- 9. Connect the increase in number and magnitude of severe weather events with climate change when disseminating information to the public.
- 2. Add URBAN DESIGNER to the Standard Occupational Code Manual and work with BLS(Labor), Census, IRS and Education to get the occupation into the public consciousness. Students, especially, must know about this professional opportunity to design walkable, people-focused places that support our climate goals.
- 3. Seek to locate all of DOL's physical locations in such a way that they occupy and support operations with distributed footprints rather than centralized ones, and can thus help to play an anchor role in the walkable town centers around which the communities we need must be re-built to become both more sustainable and more resilient.

D.2 - DEPARTMENT OF LABOR (DOL)

BIG PICTURE

Focus on ensuring that labor is protected and supported in living in and building 15-minute communities that are equitable, sustainable, and healthy. . Reinvigorate antitrust enforcement and policy, strengthen merger policy, and break up Amazon and other tech giants in order to renew the commercial corridors of our neighborhoods and communities.

ACTION AGENDA

- 1. Seek to center providing pathways to opportunity and generational wealth-building for all, through the provision of programs to support not just unions, but also cooperatives, employee-owned trusts and firms, and supportive infrastructure such as insurance pools that can reduce overhead costs and requirements.
- 4. Recognize that skill with a shovel, hammer, griddle, or wrench is as important and valuable as skill with language or the manipulation of electronic digits representing piles of money.
- 5. Adopt a fair-tax agenda that closes loopholes for large corporations, requires large corporations and the very rich to contribute equitably so we can invest in schools, homes, health care, infrastructure, child care, and other community essentials that help small businesses thrive.⁶





D.3 - SMALL BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION (SBA)

BIG PICTURE

Help to promote and finance small business owners to create/recreate vibrant commercial districts and 15-minute neighborhoods--prioritizing BIPOC communities in a just transition to become/retain such neighborhoods as proposed in **President Biden's initiative to narrow the racial wealth gap**.

ACTION AGENDA

1. Strengthen support to programs such as “The White House Initiative on Historically Black Colleges and Universities” to train Black entrepreneurs who want to serve their neighborhoods local business needs and the Administration’s new **initiative to close the racial wealth gap**.
2. Provide seed funding at low interest rates to economic cooperatives, or housing cooperatives engaged in economic activities, to encourage reduced-risk entrepreneurship that is more likely to experience long-term success in ways that provide greater benefit to the community.
3. In its Mitigation Assistance strategy focus investment to places that will continue to be viable given the impacts of climate change without heroic creation of water sources, barriers to prevent storm surges, or reengineering to match rising sea levels; and make sure those places are supported in transitioning to become 15-minute communities.
4. Provide cohort training, with seats guaranteed for low income folks and people of color, others by application, in any line of business likely to result in methods helpful to reducing carbon emissions, sequestering carbon, building local economies, supporting walkable communities, or acting to decolonize our communities.





E. INTERNATIONAL / OTHER

E.1 - DEPARTMENT OF STATE (STATE)

BIG PICTURE

Focus on coordinating domestic and international efforts to grow the communities we need while taking the actions we must to adapt to a changing world and deal with the consequences that are already baked into the system.

ACTION AGENDA

1. Develop a NDC that sets an example for the world and commits the US to delivering the emissions reductions that the IPCC says we must achieve to limit warming to 1.5C by 2050.
2. Work with international partners to support the development, maintenance, distribution, and deployment of open source software to help create the communities of the future that we need.
3. Work with international partners to coordinate international cooperation to take the necessary climate action that is required, including adaptation of communities to increase climate resiliency, as well as disaster response preparedness and coordination.
4. Engage with international partners to create the economic and governmental groundwork for a post-carbon economy, including new fiscal systems that incentivize carbon sequestration as a new major basis of world fiscal valuation.

E.2 - DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE (DOD)

BIG PICTURE

Transition from providing a support role to the global extraction and transportation of fossil fuels, to providing crisis response and humanitarian assistance to help where needed as the world's climate continues to be more chaotic.

ACTION AGENDA

1. Work with OMB and other federal agencies to require that for a community to receive federal funding, it must have equal polling places and ballot drop boxes as those in non-majority BIPOC communities and they must have accommodative hours and equal staffing.
2. Commit to a system that can create equitable, inclusive communities free of fear of police/racial violence.
3. Acknowledge and embrace that rewriting history does not actually change what happened. Work with the community to find remedy for what has been done wrong in the past, and commit to preventing wrong from happening in the future.
4. Focus on law as a tool to encourage the building of walkable communities as well as a transition towards carbon farming and sequestration, carbon emissions reductions and elimination.
5. Elevate the Civil Rights Division, the arm responsible for enforcing federal statutes prohibiting discrimination based on race, color and sex.





ENHANCING FEDERAL CLIMATE STRATEGIES

E.3 - DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE (DOJ)

BIG PICTURE

Support equity and inclusivity--especially BIPOC voting rights--in compact, walkable communities where all are free from police brutality.

ACTION AGENDA

1. Work with OMB and other federal agencies to require that for a community to receive federal funding, it must have equal polling places and ballot drop boxes as those in non-majority BIPOC communities and they must have accommodative hours and equal staffing.
2. Commit to a system that can create equitable, inclusive communities free of fear of police/racial violence.
3. Acknowledge and embrace that rewriting history does not actually change what happened. Work with the community to find remedy for what has been done wrong in the past, and commit to preventing wrong from happening in the future.
4. Focus on law as a tool to encourage the building of walkable communities as well as a transition towards carbon farming and sequestration, carbon emissions reductions and elimination.
5. Elevate the Civil Rights Division, the arm responsible for enforcing federal statutes prohibiting discrimination based on race, color and sex.

E.4 - NATIONAL AERONAUTICS AND SPACE ADMINISTRATION (NASA)

BIG PICTURE

Since NASA satellites monitor everything from sea level to pollution to gravity shifts due to melting ice NASA should redouble its climate efforts with a focus on the safety of existing communities--with a focus on areas with the greatest number of BIPOC communities.

ACTION AGENDA

1. Distribute data to a wide audience to ensure a more granular understanding of what's happening to the planet and undergird decisions made across the government about how to respond to climate change.
2. Build a nationwide LIDAR geodataset, updated quarterly with archives kept and comparison statistics published, to allow for the establishment of baseline above-ground measurements. Update these measurements regularly.
3. Increase outreach about NASA's studies of the Earth's systems and cycles that create and maintain conditions for life on the planet, and the jeopardy to them from climate change. As a highly respected institution by the public, NASA has a trusted voice that should be at the forefront of the national dialogue on climate change.





ENHANCING FEDERAL CLIMATE STRATEGIES

LEGISLATIVE BRANCH ACTIONS

(US) HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES AND SENATE

BIG PICTURE

Focus on transitioning to a post-carbon economy that centers on climate justice and reducing demand for fossil fuels through funding redevelopment to compact, dense, walkable communities. Commit to, fund, and deliver on commitments to reduce GHG emissions to zero by 2050, with a 50% reduction from 1990 by 2030, and an 80% reduction by 2040. Focus on restoring the lands and waters of the United States to repair the damage done by decades of industrialization and suburbanization, and on restoring the communities of America to repair the damage done by centuries of racism and top-down capitalism, by enabling community-supportive models that better balance capitalism's need for profit with the needs of people.

ACTION AGENDA

VOTING RIGHTS:

1. We cannot have climate justice without granting the franchise to communities that have been historically disenfranchised; we therefore call for a national vote-by-mail system to ensure that all citizens have equal access to the right to vote.

TRANSPORTATION:

1. Re-define parking meters to include electric vehicle charging functionality: Fund the installation of urban on-street curbside electric vehicle charging infrastructure, to support every vehicle being able to park at every curb and plug in to charge using a single national standard.

2. Fund the removal of roadway capacity through projects such as freeway removals and urban road redesigns as will be needed to right-size automobile infrastructure for the mode share it will need to support in the future, while creating the infrastructure needed to create and maintain complete walking, bicycling / micro-mobility, local transit, and high speed / national electric passenger and freight rail networks.

- A. Land reclaimed from freeways and other oversized infrastructure removal in cities can situationally be placed into community land trusts in order to begin to right the wrongs of the past in damaged and disadvantaged communities.

3. Support communities to power rail transit with **distributed energy**.
4. Condition all funding on having a local (statewide, regional, and local municipal) climate adaptation plan that shows a pathway to achieving national carbon emissions reductions and sequestration goals by each interim target year.

ENVIRONMENT:

1. Disallow construction of any new plastic infrastructure, starting with the **“Break Free From Plastic Pollution Act of 2021”**.
2. Even more important than General Services Administration (GSA) committing to 100% renewable energy sources in federally-owned real estate by 2025 is the need to commit to locating new buildings in communities that are walkable and racially just; phase in closure over time of those federal buildings that are not in such communities.





ENHANCING FEDERAL CLIMATE STRATEGIES

General Service Administration (GSA)

- A. Realize that no amount of renewable energy will greenwash location-inefficient, drive-to only government buildings; either work to retrofit suburban areas to transition them into 15-minute neighborhoods by adding pedestrian, bicycling, transit, and a mix of uses at a pedestrian scale, or relocate to a location that already has those amenities and services.
- B. Provide support for state, regional, and municipal banks to lend to local green new deal initiatives, to ensure there is always sufficient credit available for capital projects, especially those desperately needed in the near term to enact a just transition within the timeframe specified (now and 2050, with heavy action in early years).

HOUSING:

1. Pass **S. 902: Housing Supply and Affordability Act** that would create an annual \$300 million grant program to award states and localities that drafted housing plans aimed at increasing the supply of housing, improving housing affordability, and reducing barriers to housing development.
2. HR 4808, the **Housing, Opportunity, Mobility, and Equity (HOME) Act**, introduced by Sen. Cory Booker (D–N.J.) and Rep. Jim Clyburn (D–S.C.) in 2019. It would require recipients of federal housing and transportation dollars to implement strategies for making housing more affordable and “inclusive.”

ENERGY:

1. Reverse the 44 tax exemptions for energy down to the three suggested by Senate Finance Committee Chair Ron Wyden (D-OR): renewable energy development; energy conservation programs and transportation fuels. See Wyden’s legislative proposals.

DIVESTING FROM FOSSIL FUELS:

1. Pass HR 8760 **Restructuring Environmentally Sound Pensions in Order to Negate Disaster Act of 2020 (RESPOND Act)**, requiring the Securities and Exchange Commission and the Federal Reserve to issue an annual report analyzing how climate change poses a risk to \$565 billion in federal employee retirement funds
2. Pass legislation along the lines of S 3424 “Retirement Investments for a Sustainable Economy Act of 2018” that would allow federal employees to choose a fossil-fuel-free pension plan.
3. **Federal Retirement Thrift Investment Board (FRTIB)**

BIG PICTURE: As the administrator of the Thrift Savings Plan (TSP), the largest defined contribution plan in the world, providing federal employees the opportunity to save for retirement, take the opportunity to change the private investing game-- not only away from fossil fuels, but toward equitable and resilient urbanism.





ENHANCING FEDERAL CLIMATE STRATEGIES

- A. Pass legislation along the lines of S 3424 “Retirement Investments for a Sustainable Economy Act of 2018” introduced by Senator Merkley (D-OR) that would allow federal employees to choose a fossil-fuel-free pension plan. **Federal Workers Are Forced to Invest in Fossil Fuels. A New Bill Would End That.**
- B. Require an annual report about the risk to federal employees retirement funds from climate change.



ENDNOTES & RESOURCES

ENDNOTES

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