

Draft Contra Costa County 2045 General Plan & Climate Action Plan 2024 Update

CLIMATE ACTION PLAN









The Draft Climate Action Plan (2024 CAP) is Contra Costa County’s plan to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, adapt to a changing climate, and achieve a long-term vision for sustainability. The 2024 CAP, an update to the County’s 2015 CAP, is a companion to the County’s General Plan as part of Envision Contra Costa and reduces GHG emissions associated with implementation of the General Plan. The Draft 2024 CAP implements the Draft 2045 General Plan’s policies and addresses behaviors, regulations, and investment decisions that reduce GHG emissions or promote climate resilience. As the County updates other planning documents, such as the County Ordinance Code or Specific Plans, staff will ensure that these documents support and are consistent with the 2024 CAP. The 2024 CAP is expected to reduce GHG emissions by more than 40% by 2030 and 85% by 2045 and put the County on track to be net-carbon neutral.

Key Terms

- Carbon Neutrality** is achieved when GHG emissions released to the atmosphere reduce to zero, either by entirely eliminating all GHG emissions or by balancing out all remaining GHG emissions through carbon removal practices so that the “net” emissions are zero.
- GHG Emissions** are emissions of gases that trap heat in the earth’s atmosphere, contributing to climate change.
- Adaptation** is making changes in response to current or future conditions, such as the increased frequency and intensity of climate-related hazards, usually to reduce harm.
- Resilience** is the capacity of an individual, a community, an organization, or a natural system to prepare for disruptions, to recover from shocks and stresses, and to adapt and grow from a disruptive experience. Community resilience is the ability of communities to withstand, recover, and learn from past disasters to strengthen future response and recovery efforts.

CAP Goals & Strategies

The following draft strategies and associated actions are designed to guide Contra Costa County in successfully implementing the 2024 CAP.

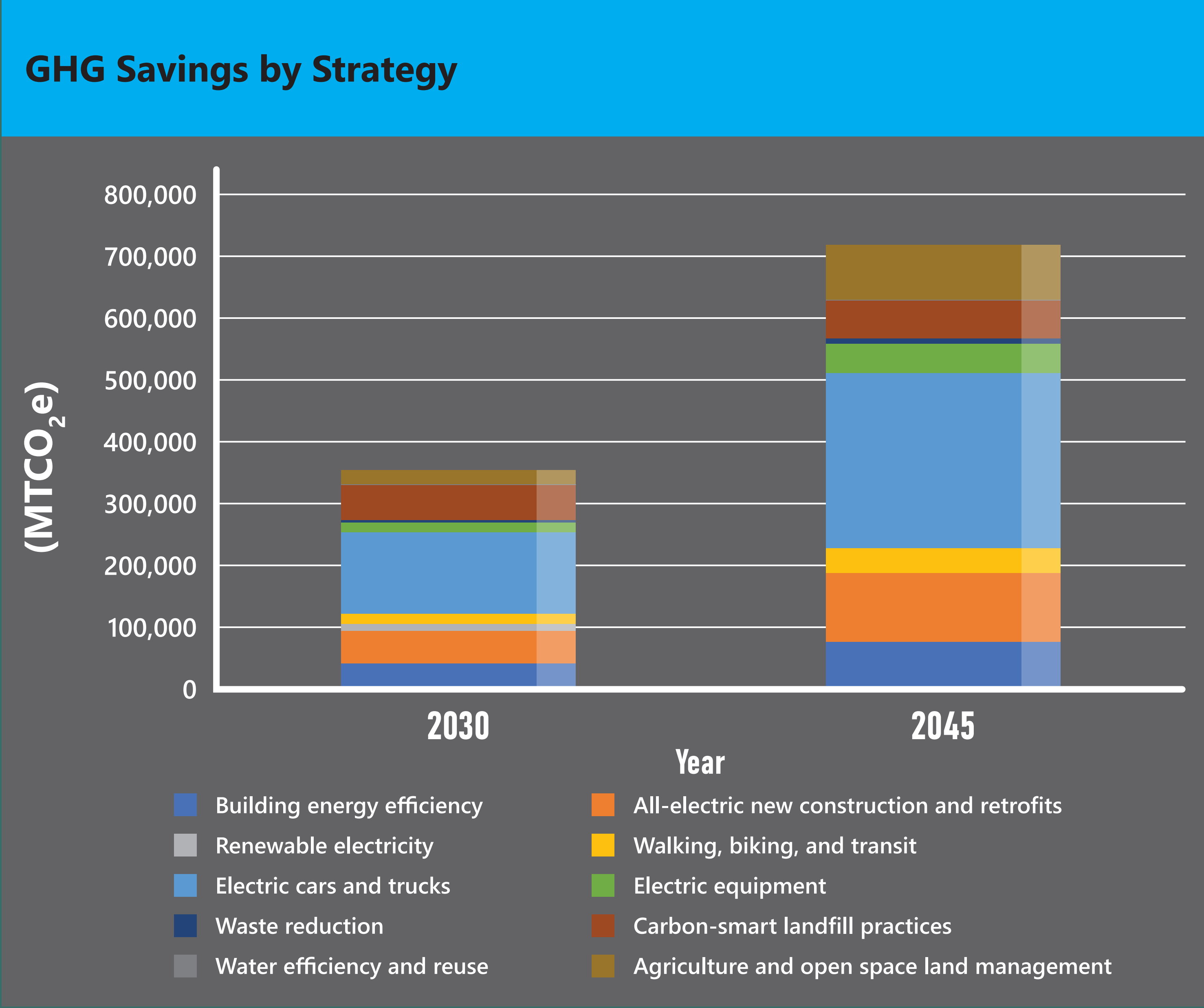
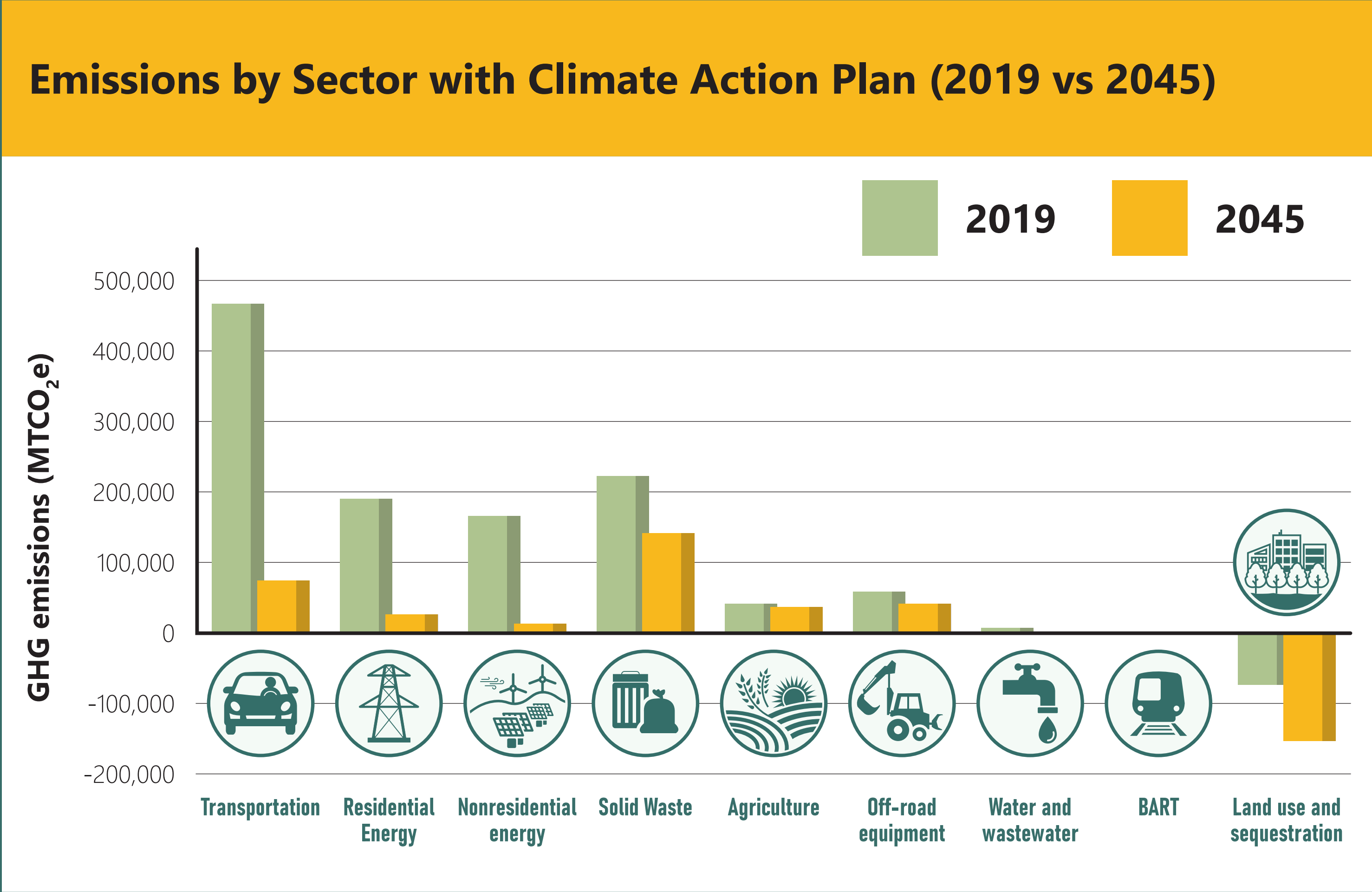
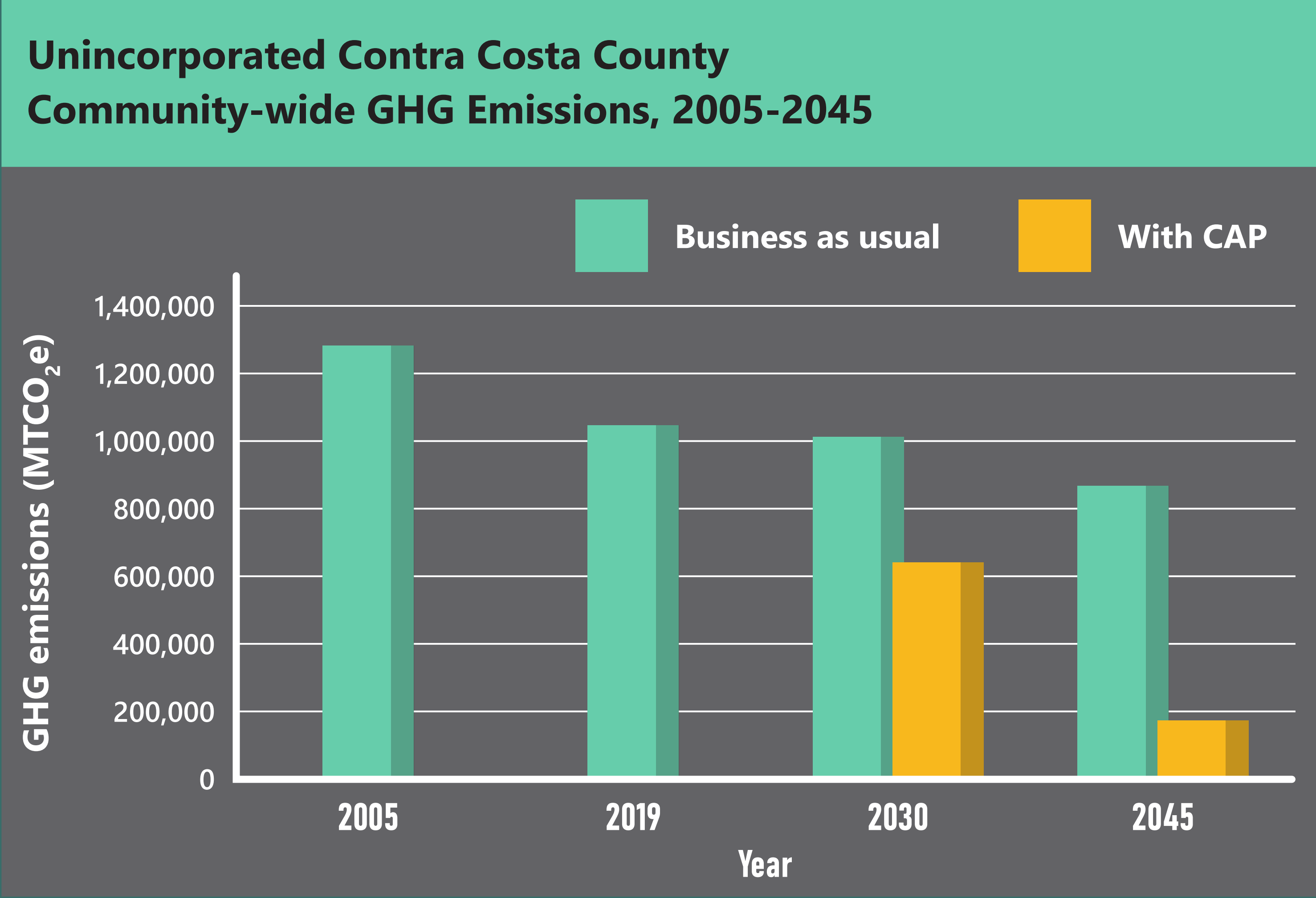
	Clean and Efficient Built Environment (BE) Homes, workplaces, and businesses in unincorporated Contra Costa County run efficiently on clean energy.
BE-1: Require new buildings or additions built in unincorporated Contra Costa County, on or after January 1, 2023, to be low-carbon or carbon neutral. *	
BE-2: Retrofit existing buildings and facilities in the unincorporated county, and County infrastructure, to reduce energy use and convert to low-carbon or carbon-neutral fuels. *	
BE-3: Increase the amount of electricity used and generated from renewable sources in the county. *	
	No Waste Contra Costa (NW) Contra Costa County disposes no more solid waste than 2.2 pounds per person per day (PPD).
NW-1: Increase composting of organic waste. *	
NW-2: Reduce waste from County operations. *	
NW-3: Increase community-wide recycling and waste minimization programs. *	
NW-4: Reduce emissions from landfill gas. *	
	Reduce Water Use and Increase Drought Resilience (DR) Contra Costa County uses less water and communities are prepared for drought.
DR-1: Reduce indoor and outdoor water use. *	
DR-2: Ensure sustainable and diverse water supplies. *	
	Clean Transportation Network (TR) Contra Costa County’s transportation network provides safe and accessible options for walking, biking, and transit. If residents and workers are driving, they are in zero-emission vehicles.
TR-1: Improve the viability of walking, biking, zero-carbon commuting, and using public transit for travel within, to, and from the county. *	
TR-2: Increase the use of zero-emission vehicles. Transition to a zero-emission County fleet by 2030 and a community fleet that is at least 50 percent zero-emission by 2030.	
	Resilient Communities and Natural Infrastructure (NI) Contra Costa County will increase resilience to climate hazards and foster community health.
NI-1: Protect against and adapt to changes in sea levels and other shoreline flooding conditions.	
NI-2: Protect against and adapt to increases in the frequency and intensity of wildfire events.	
NI-3: Establish and maintain community resilience hubs.	
NI-4: Sequester carbon on natural and working lands in Contra Costa County. *	
NI-5: Minimize heat island effects through the use of cool roofs and green infrastructure.	
NI-6: Protect communities against additional hazards created or exacerbated by climate change.	
	Climate Equity (CE) The Climate Action Plan will mitigate environmental factors leading to health disparities, promote safe and livable communities, and promote investments that improve neighborhood accessibility.
CE-1: Provide access to affordable, clean, safe, and healthy housing and jobs.	
CE-2: Invest in solutions to support climate equity.	
CE-3: Increase access to parks and open space.	
CE-4: Ensure residents have equitable, year-round access to affordable, local fresh food.	
CE-5: Ensure that large industrial facilities act as good neighbors.	
	Leadership (L) Contra Costa County is a model for how local government can take action on climate issues.
L-1: Establish Contra Costa County as a leader among local governments for addressing climate issues.	
L-2: Continue to recognize the climate crisis as an emergency for Contra Costa County and make addressing climate change a top County priority.	
	Implementation (IS)
IS-1: Monitor and report progress toward achieving Climate Action Plan goals on an annual basis.	
IS-2: Continue collaborative partnerships with agencies and community groups that support Climate Action Plan implementation, with an emphasis on residents and community-based organizations from Impacted Communities.	
IS-3: Secure necessary funding to implement the Climate Action Plan.	
IS-4: Continue to update the baseline emissions inventory and Climate Action Plan every five years.	
IS-5: Maintain and update the Climate Action Plan to allow for greater resilience.	

*Indicates strategy with quantified GHG emissions reductions.

As of 2019, the County’s emissions have fallen 18 percent below 2005 levels, in part as result of the County’s effective implementation of the 2015 CAP. The County has taken several actions to reduce GHG emissions as directed by the 2015 CAP.

- Established a dedicated team to implement the CAP and a Sustainability Commission to guide CAP implementation.
- Joined the community choice energy program MCE, increasing the amount of renewable electricity used in homes and businesses.
- Prepared a Renewable Resource Potential Study to look at the potential to generate clean energy in Contra Costa County.
- Adopted policies for complete streets and Vision Zero, and an Active Transportation Plan.
- Adopted an ordinance to require all new homes and most new nonresidential buildings to be all-electric.

The Draft 2024 CAP continues the County’s current successes while adding new opportunities to reduce GHG emissions and adapt to a changing climate.



Sources:
Assembly Bill 1279, 2022.
California Natural Resource Agency, Safeguarding California Plan: 2018 Update; California’s Climate Adaptation Strategy: 2018.
California Office of Emergency Services, California Adaptation Planning Guide, 2020.
Louise Bedsworth, Dan Cayan, Guido Franco, Leah Fisher, Sonya Ziaja, “Statewide Summary Report,” in California’s Fourth Climate Change Assessment, publication number: SUMCCCA-2018-013, 2018.