CLIMATE ACTION UPDATE MONTGOMERY COUNTY, MARYLAND

MAY 28, 2025
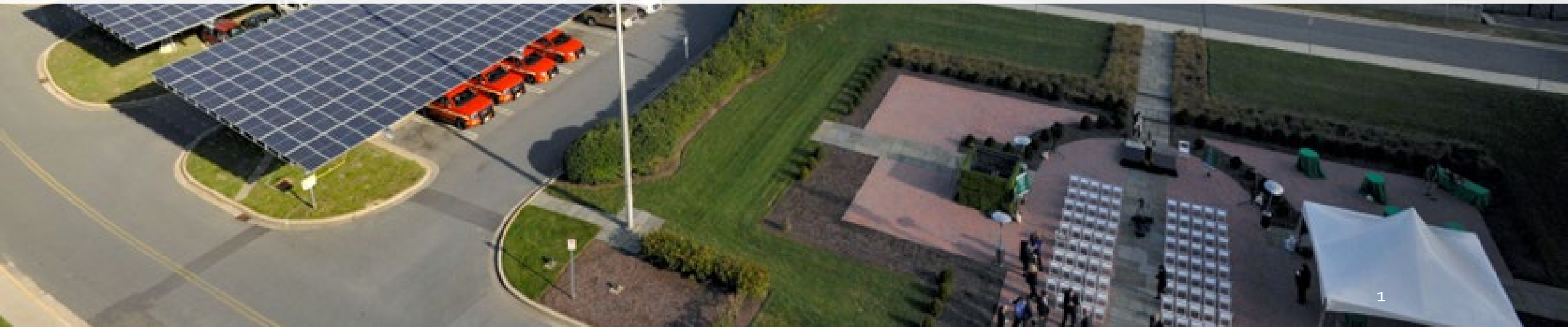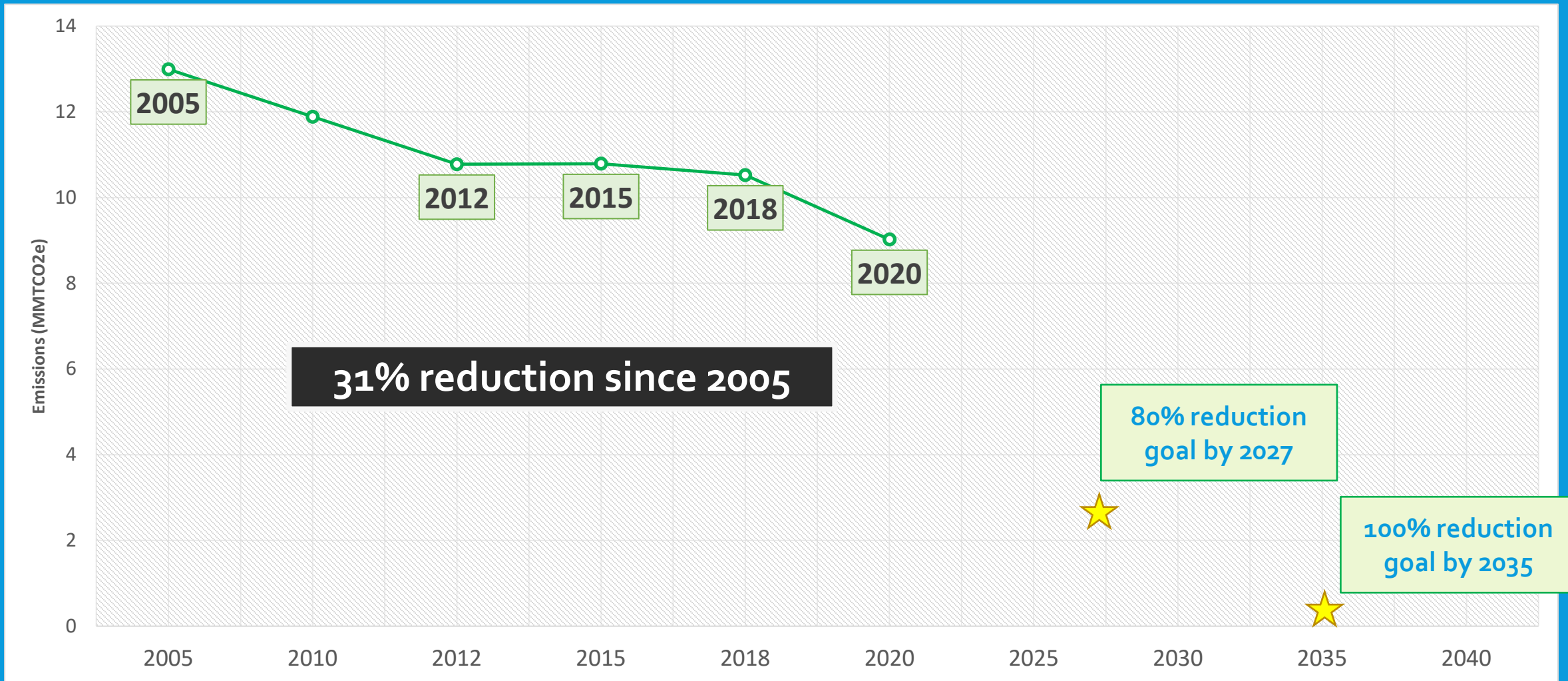
AGENDA

Metro Station, Bethesda, Maryland

CLIMATE ACTION IN MONTGOMERY COUNTY

MONTGOMERY COUNTY'S
GOAL TO COMBAT CLIMATE CHANGE:

Reduce Countywide greenhouse gas emissions, climate change pollution, by 80% by 2027 and reaching 100% elimination by 2035.
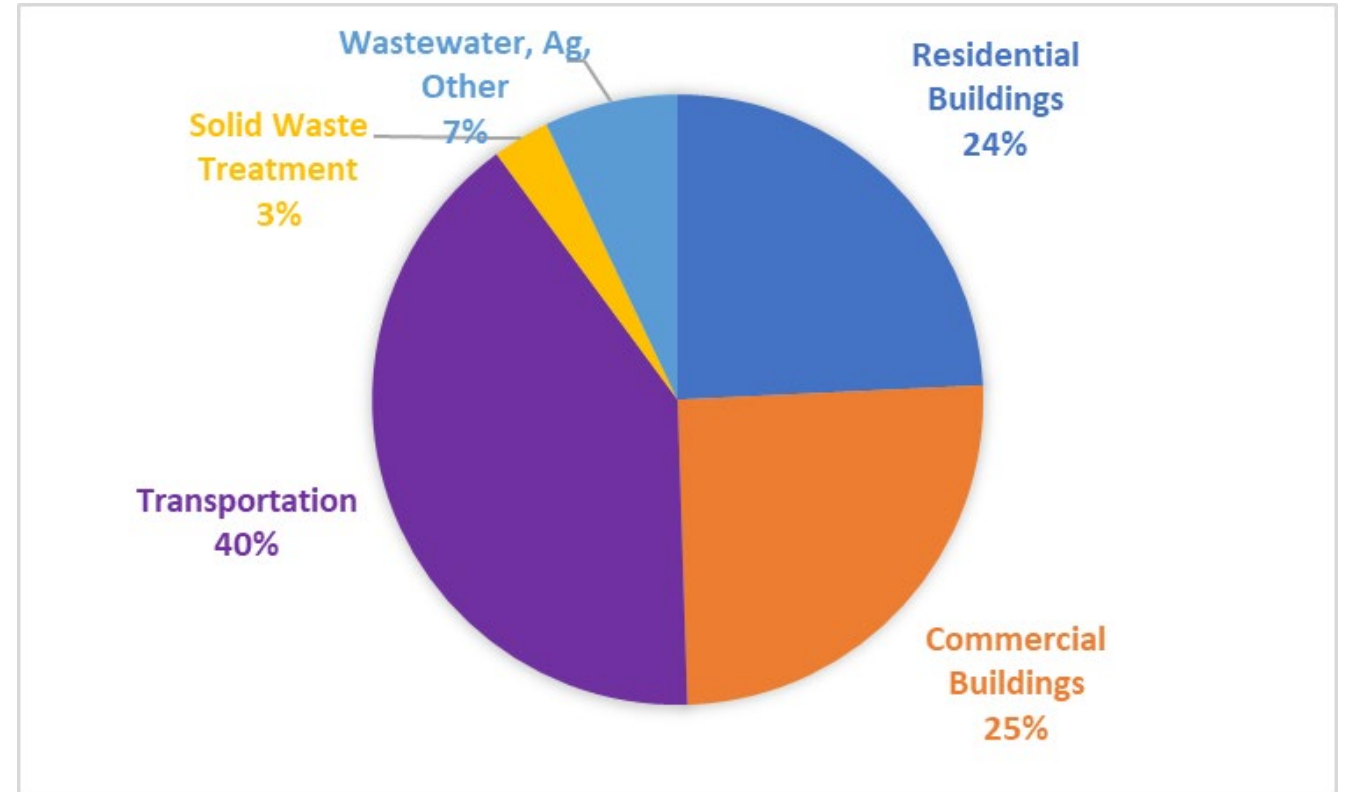
Montgomery County's Climate Goals and Progress

Chart: Emissions (MMTCO2e) from 2005 to 2040

- 2005
- 2012
- 2015
- 2018
- 2020

31% reduction since 2005

80% reduction goal by 2027

100% reduction goal by 2035

MONTGOMERY COUNTY GHG SOURCES 2020

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Pie chart showing:
- Residential Buildings 24%
- Commercial Buildings 25%
- Transportation 40%
- Solid Waste Treatment 3%
- Wastewater, Ag, Other 7%

MONTGOMERY COUNTY CLIMATE ACTION PLAN

MONTGOMERY COUNTY
CLIMATE ACTION PLAN

Building a Healthy, Equitable, Resilient Community

JUNE 2021

Climate Action Plan Overview

- **Clean Energy:** Montgomery County uses and invests in clean, reliable, affordable energy.

- **Buildings:** Montgomery County is home to resilient and efficient buildings.

- **Transportation:** Montgomery County safely, affordably, and sustainably moves people and connects places.

- **Carbon Sequestration:** Montgomery County has conserved and enhanced its nature-based solutions including forest, meadow, and wetland ecosystems, greenspaces and trees, while reversing carbon dioxide emissions.

- **Climate Adaptation:** Montgomery County is equipped with the resources and infrastructure to withstand the impacts of climate change.

- **Climate Governance:** Montgomery County is institutionalizing an organizational culture and structure that fosters creativity, cross-department collaboration and innovation to implement systemic climate solutions.

- **Public Engagement, Partnerships, and Education:** Montgomery County's community members are empowered, engaged, and motivated to take action on climate change, while striving for equity among all members of the community.

Climate action plan and updates

CLIMATE ACTION PLAN IMPLEMENTATION
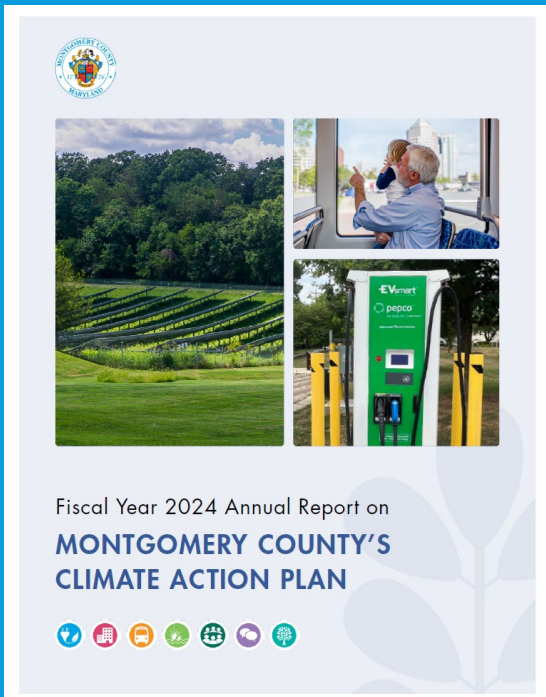
- **Fiscal Year 2024 Annual Report** on Climate Action Plan: the County has **started 78 of the 86 actions in the Climate Action Plan and made significant progress on, or completed, 55 actions.**

- **Budget:** Since the release of Climate Action Plan in 2021, the County has **added $171.7 million** in investments in climate action programs and initiatives to the budget.

CLEAN ENERGY HIGHLIGHTS

- **Low-Income Electrification:** Launched a $1.5M grant program for pre-weatherization, electrification and climate adaptation in low- and moderate-income homes.
- **Solar:** Promoted the Capital Area Solar Switch, with 1,600+ County households registering for affordable solar installations in 2024. 16 Megawatts (MW) Renewable Energy completed on County facilities and ongoing Management.
- **Green Bank Investments:** The Montgomery County Green Bank deployed $37 million in clean energy and climate-resilient projects, leveraging $129.5 million in total investment.
- **Hydrogen:** Broke ground on EMTOC bus depot with plans to produce green hydrogen on site. Won a $15M "Low or No-Emissions" Award for this first hydrogen bus project on the East Coast.

BUILDINGS HIGHLIGHTS

- **Building Energy Performance Standards:** Building Energy Performance Standards regulations approved by the County Council in February 2025. Over the long run these regulations will reduce the greenhouse gas (GHG) impact of building operations, addressing 15 percent of the entire GHG emissions countywide.

- **Building Codes:** Adopted 2021 Energy Code and Green Code supporting a transition to net zero construction (residential energy code is the 2021 IECC and the commercial energy code is ASHRAE 90.1-2022).

- **Efficient and Green Schools:** In FY24, MCPS reviewed Investment Grade Audits for 50 schools and executed Energy Savings Performance Contracts with two contractors to complete approximately 244 projects in the next 2 years.

- During FY24, MCPS added 4 schools as Maryland Green Schools and recertified 20 schools, bringing the total to 101 schools (48%).

TRANSPORTATION HIGHLIGHTS
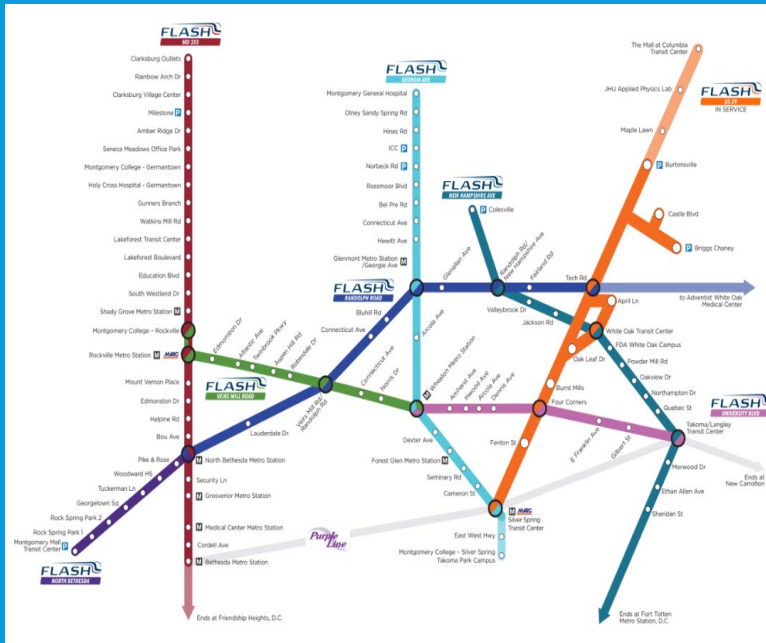
- **Zero-Emission Bus Transition:** In 2024, the County completed its initial Zero Emission Bus Transition Plan, to transition its entire bus fleet to zero-emission vehicles by 2035.

- 25 electric buses operating with a contract to buy 89 more.

- **Fleet Electrification:** Electrifying heavy-duty fleet, including library box truck and fire department Ford F150 trucks.

- **Bus Rapid Transit (BRT):** Advancing BRT network including Route 29, and enhanced service "pink" and "lime" bus routes.

- **EV Charging:** Advancing equitable expansion of vehicle charging network. Over 500 public charging plugs in the County, including 100 DC Fast Chargers. Sixty-four EV charging stations are available at parking facilities in downtown Bethesda, Silver Spring and Wheaton (community EV charging map).

CARBON SEQUESTRATION HIGHLIGHTS

- **Tree Planting:** Over the last 10 years, Tree Montgomery has planted more than 18,000 shade trees.

- **Reforestation:** In FY24, the Reforest Montgomery team organized three significant reforestation projects. To date, the county has protected over 10,500 acres – approximately 3.5 percent of the county – through more than 3,500 forest conservation easements.

- **Conservation Farming**: In FY24, county farmers practiced conservation tillage on 33,404 acres and cover cropping on 12,180 acres, reducing their GHG by 16,147 tons of carbon dioxide equivalents through the use of these and other best management practices.

CLIMATE RESILIENCE HIGHLIGHTS

- **Microgrid Projects:** In FY24 the County initiated the design and construction of three microgrid projects at key locations – the Equipment Maintenance Transit Operations Center, the 6th District Police Station, and the Public Safety Communication Center. These microgrids will provide crucial emergency power in case of extended power outages.

- **Alert Montgomery:** The County generates temperature alerts for the public through Alert Montgomery during extreme heat and cold events. Alert Montgomery has 249,382 registered contacts and continues to be the largest mass notification system in the National Capital Region. Adding bilingual alerts and messages is underway.

- **Resiliency Hubs:** Design and construction underway.

CLIMATE GOVERNANCE HIGHLIGHT: INSTITUTIONALIZING CONSIDERATION OF CLIMATE AND EQUITY

- Established **Office of Racial Equity and Social Justice.**

- Climate, Energy, and Air Quality Advisory Committee (CEAQAC) and Racial Equity and Social Justice Advisory Committee (RESJAC) of **appointed community members** to advise the County.

- Incorporate both racial equity and climate change considerations into County annual **budgeting process.**

- All County Council **proposed legislation** is accompanied by both racial equity and social justice impact statements, economic impact statements, and assessments of the legislation's effect on the County's contribution to addressing climate change.

- **Climate Change Officer and Chief Equity Officer** included in budget and policy decision-making.

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT, PARTNERSHIPS AND EDUCATION HIGHLIGHTS

BE CLIMATE SMART
Montgomery County, MD

- Launched Climate Smart campaign.

- Nature centers in the County hosted 26,441 participants in FY24.

- Montgomery County Public Schools has added an Annual Youth Climate Summit and Student Climate Council.

- Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) has added Spanish language outreach staff.

- In 2024 DEP hosted 270 educational waste reduction and recycling events engaging over 22,000 residents.

QUESTIONS

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