

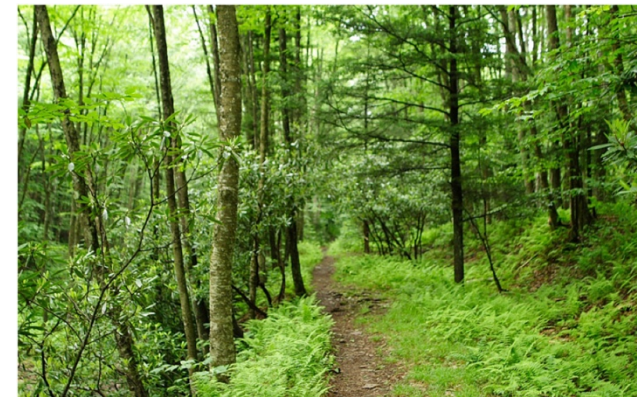


COUNTY OF SIMCOE

# MUNICIPAL COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW

Council Workshop

## Watershed Planning and Climate Change Strategy



COUNTY OF SIMCOE

December 9, 2021



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# Protecting the Water Resource System

- While the current Growth Plan establishes the need to ‘identify’ a water resource system – Provincial mapping has not been provided
- Such a water resource system is expected to include wetlands, watercourses, lake seepage areas and springs, groundwater recharge areas, highly vulnerable aquifers and other similar features
- 2019 Growth Plan also places greater emphasis on watershed planning to ‘inform’ land use planning
- Specifically, Section 4.2.1.1 of the 2019 Growth Plan states “Upper-and single-tier municipalities, partnering with lower-tier municipalities and conservation authorities as appropriate, will ensure that watershed planning is undertaken to support a comprehensive, integrated, and long-term approach to the protection, enhancement, or restoration of the quality and quantity of water within a watershed.”

# Protecting the Water Resource System (cont'd)

- Another component of the MCR is therefore to:
  1. The scope of watershed planning that is required to 'inform' the County OP.
  2. Policies for watershed planning that should be included in the County OP.
  3. A framework for watershed planning in Simcoe moving forward.
- Work program involves the carrying out of a detailed review of existing information (Technical Memo #1 – October 13, 2021)
- Establishing a vision and a series of goals, objectives and targets (Technical Memo #3 – October 13, 2021)
- Recommend high level strategies to manage growth, including a review of best practices, monitoring, gap-filling and future studies (currently underway)

# Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation

- One of the foundational elements of the Growth Plan going forward is that:
  1. Communities and infrastructure must be adapted to be more resilient;
  2. Greenhouse gas emissions across all sectors of the economy need to be reduced;
  3. Valuable water resources and natural areas need to be protected; and
  4. Valuable agricultural lands that produce healthy local food for future generations need to be protected
- One of the guiding principles of the Growth Plan (1.2.1) is to:

*Integrate climate change considerations into planning and managing growth such as planning for more resilient communities and infrastructure – that are adaptive to the impacts of a changing climate –and moving towards environmentally sustainable communities by incorporating approaches to reduce greenhouse gas emissions*



# Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation (cont'd)

What can the County do in the context of the MCR:

1. Direct the majority of growth to existing settlements to support the development of complete communities;
2. Require higher rates of intensification in built-up areas to encourage more people to live close to the services they need;
3. Reduce dependence on the automobile by requiring higher densities that support transit in new development areas; and
4. Protect the natural heritage system and water resource system; and
5. Protect agricultural land for the long term.

*We are working towards achieving these objectives*

# Setting up the Climate Change Strategy (Section 4.2.10.2 of Growth Plan)

In planning to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and address the impacts of a changing climate, municipalities are encouraged to:

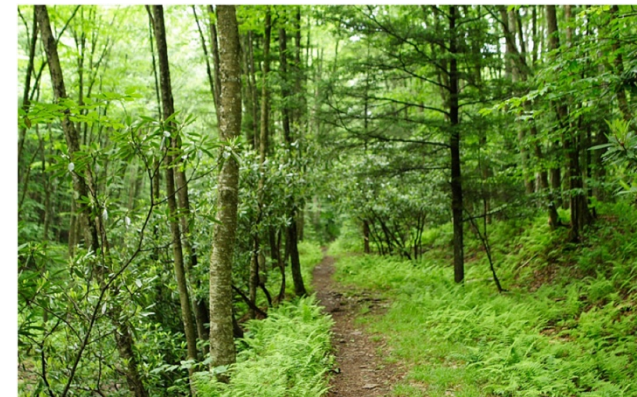
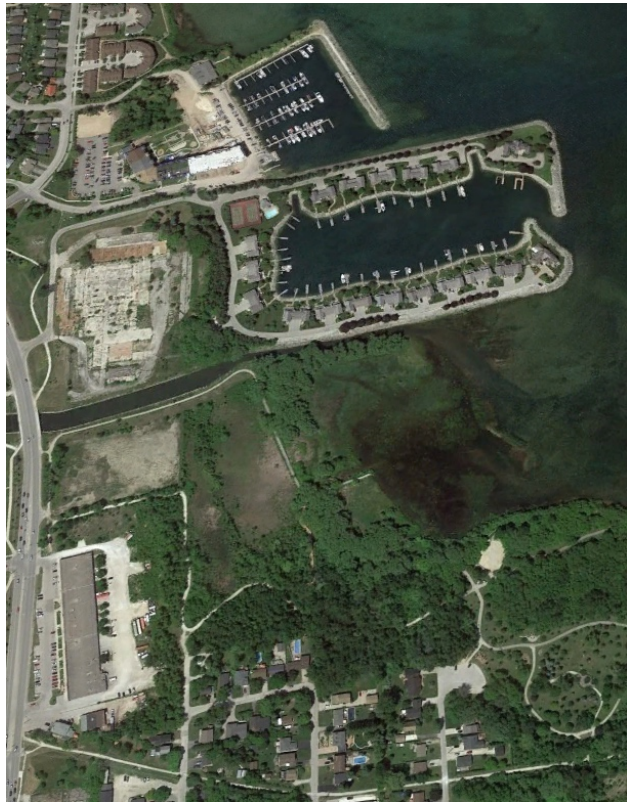
- develop strategies to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and improve resilience through the identification of vulnerabilities to climate change, land use planning, planning for infrastructure, including transit and energy, green infrastructure, and low impact development, and the conservation objectives in policy 4.2.9.1;
- Completing greenhouse gas inventories for transportation, buildings, waste management, and municipal operations; and
- establish municipal interim and long-term greenhouse gas emission reduction targets that support provincial targets and reflect consideration of the goal of low-carbon communities and monitor and report on progress made towards the achievement of these targets.



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## Council Workshop Climate Change Strategy



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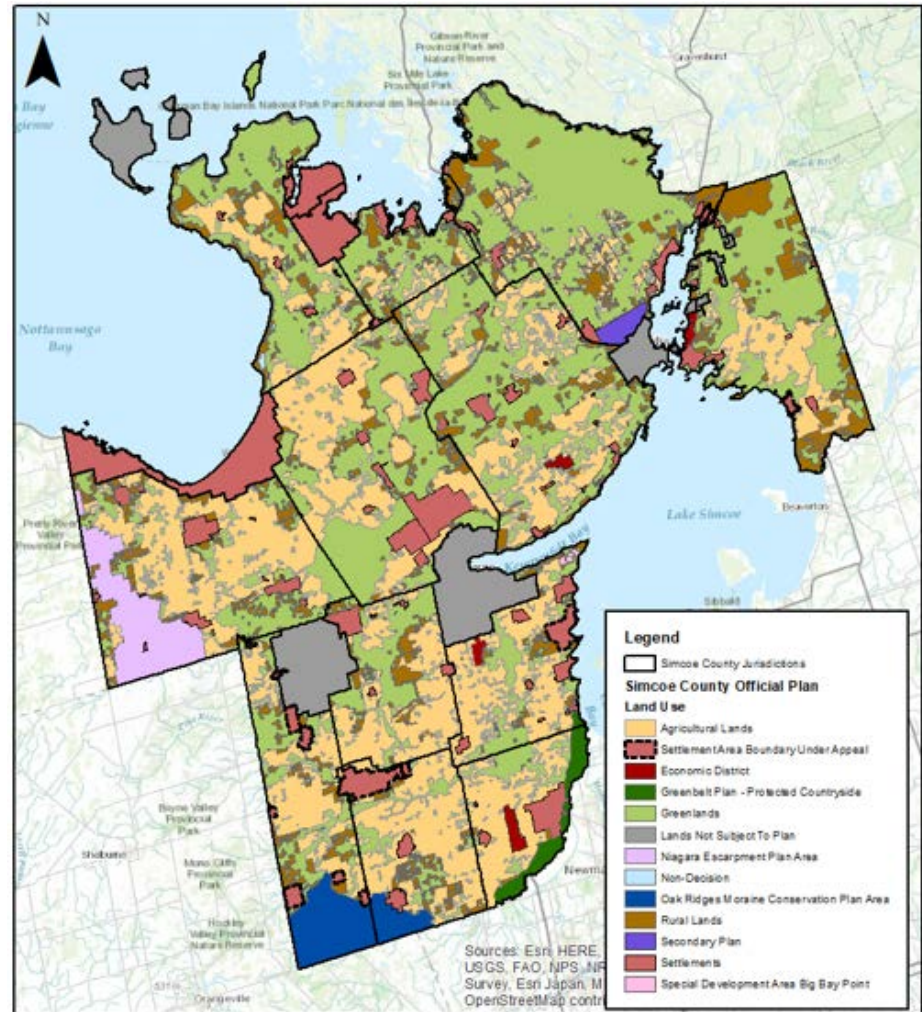
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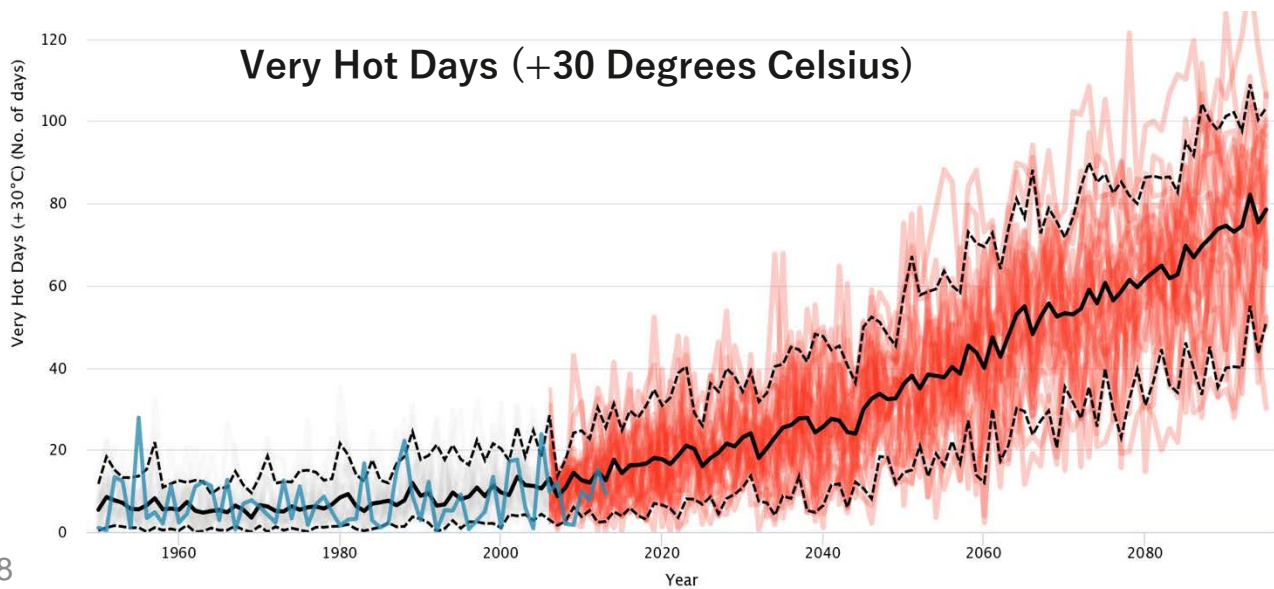
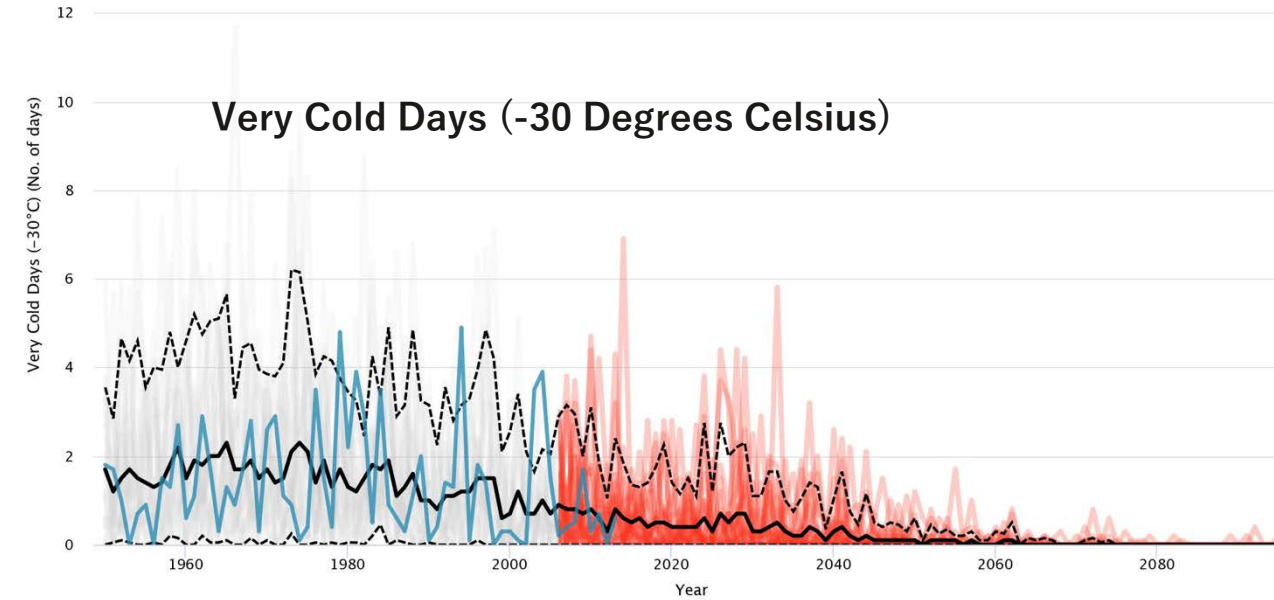
# Key Growth Plan Policies — Protecting What is Valuable

- Implement Provincial Natural Heritage System (224,000 ha)
- Watershed planning informs protection of watershed resource systems and planning decisions
- Protect Provincial Agricultural System (212,000 ha)
- **Climate change mitigation & adaptation**

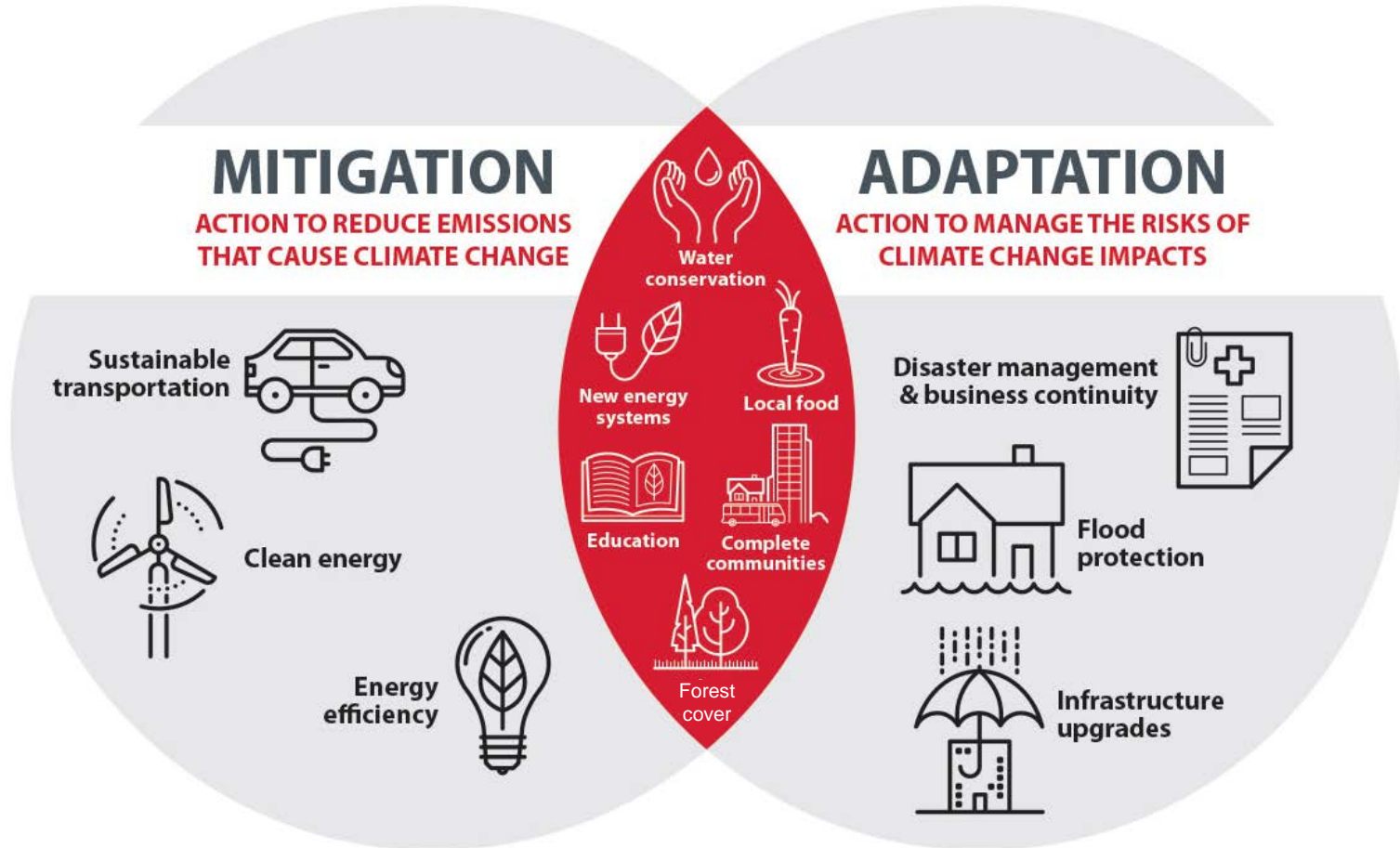




# Why Climate Change Matters in Simcoe

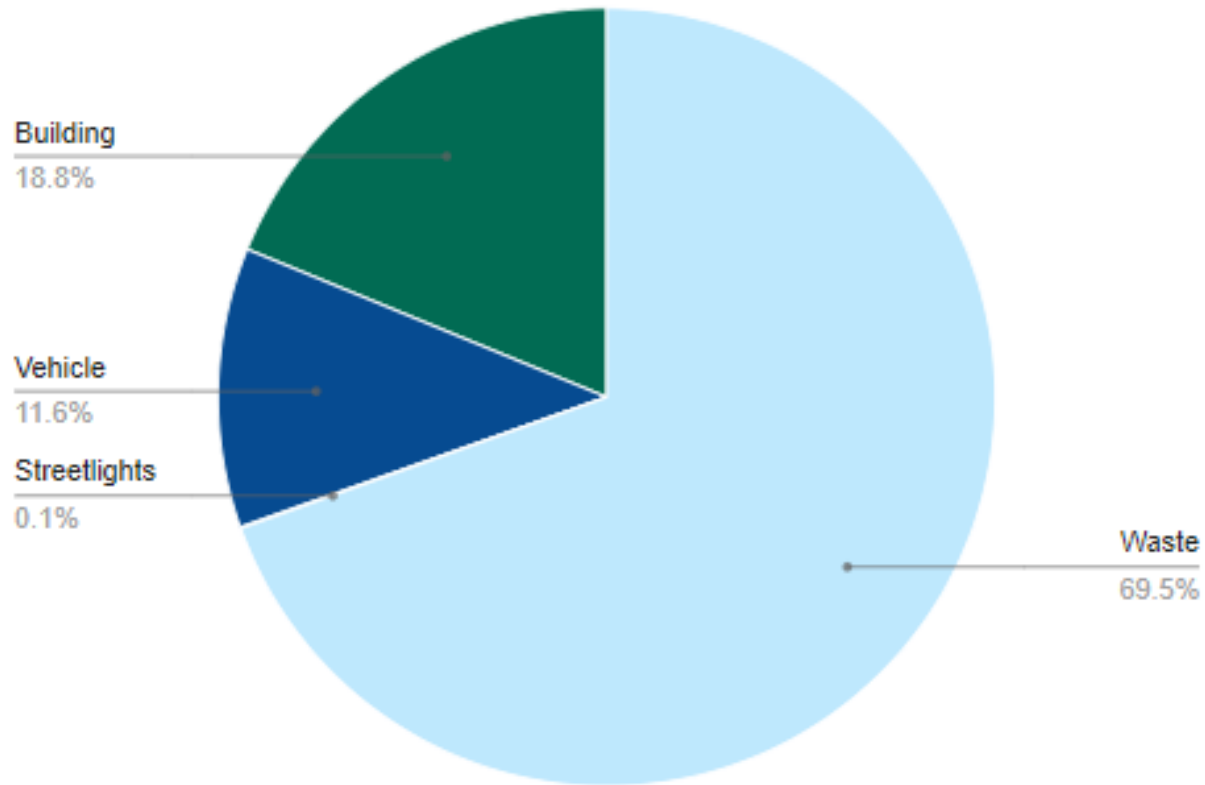


# Building Climate Resilience



Source: City of Calgary

# GHG Emissions in Simcoe County

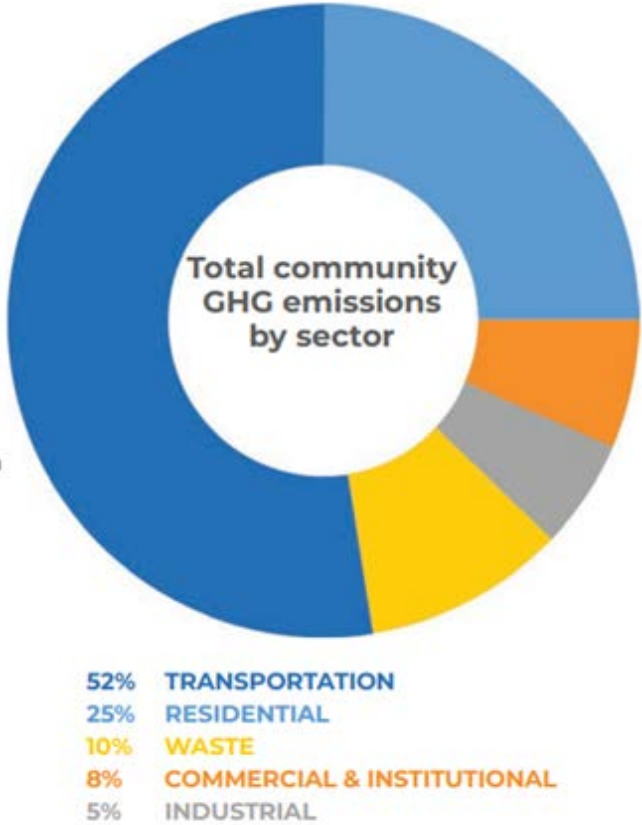


## Total Simcoe County Corporate Emissions

Source: CCW 2021-271, October 2021



# GHG Emissions in Simcoe County



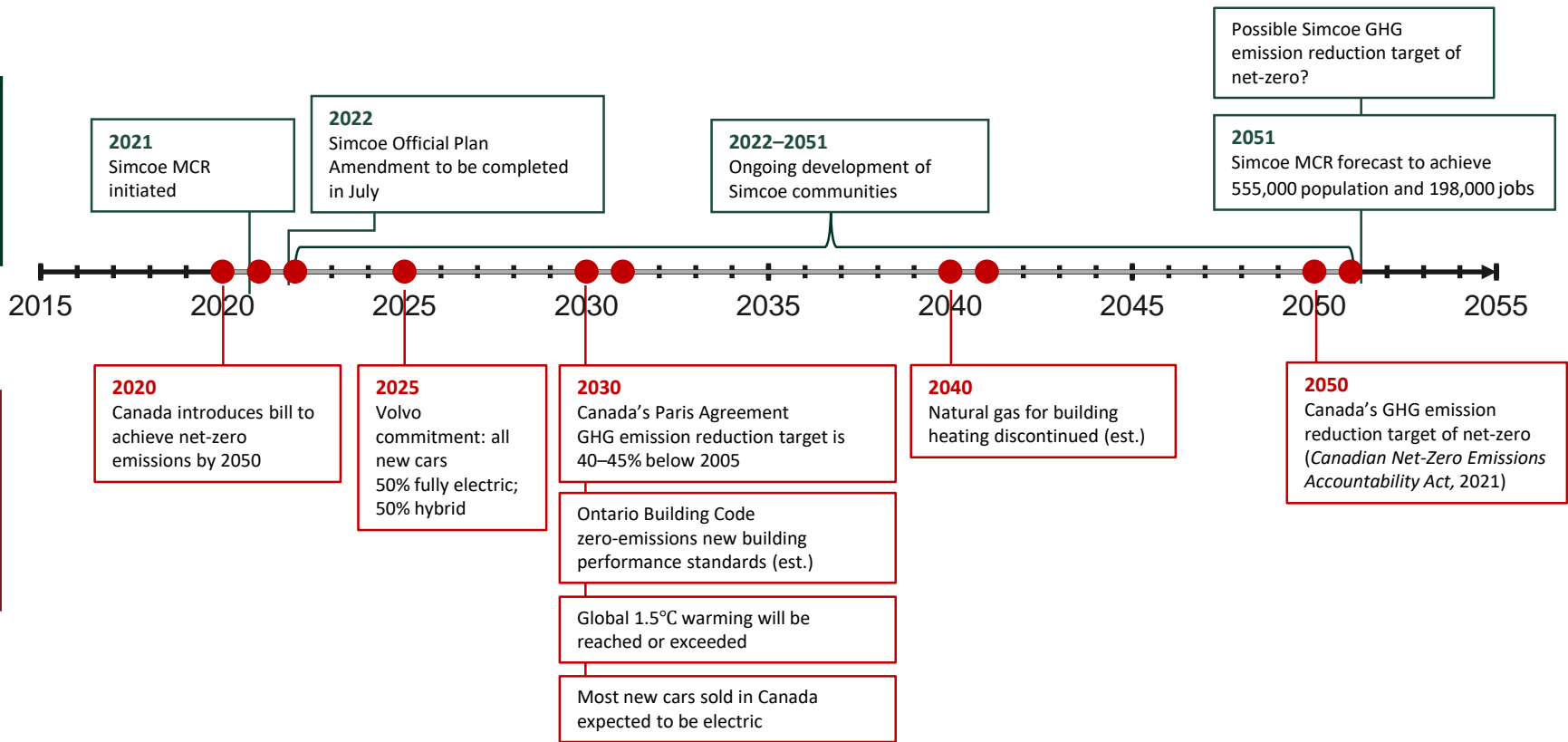
## Community Emissions (Typical)

Source: 2018 *Local Climate Change Action Plan* prepared by Sustainable Severn Sound for six local municipalities in central and north Simcoe County and one municipality from the District of Muskoka

# Climate Action Timeline and Simcoe Municipal Comprehensive Review

Simcoe County

Ontario & Canada

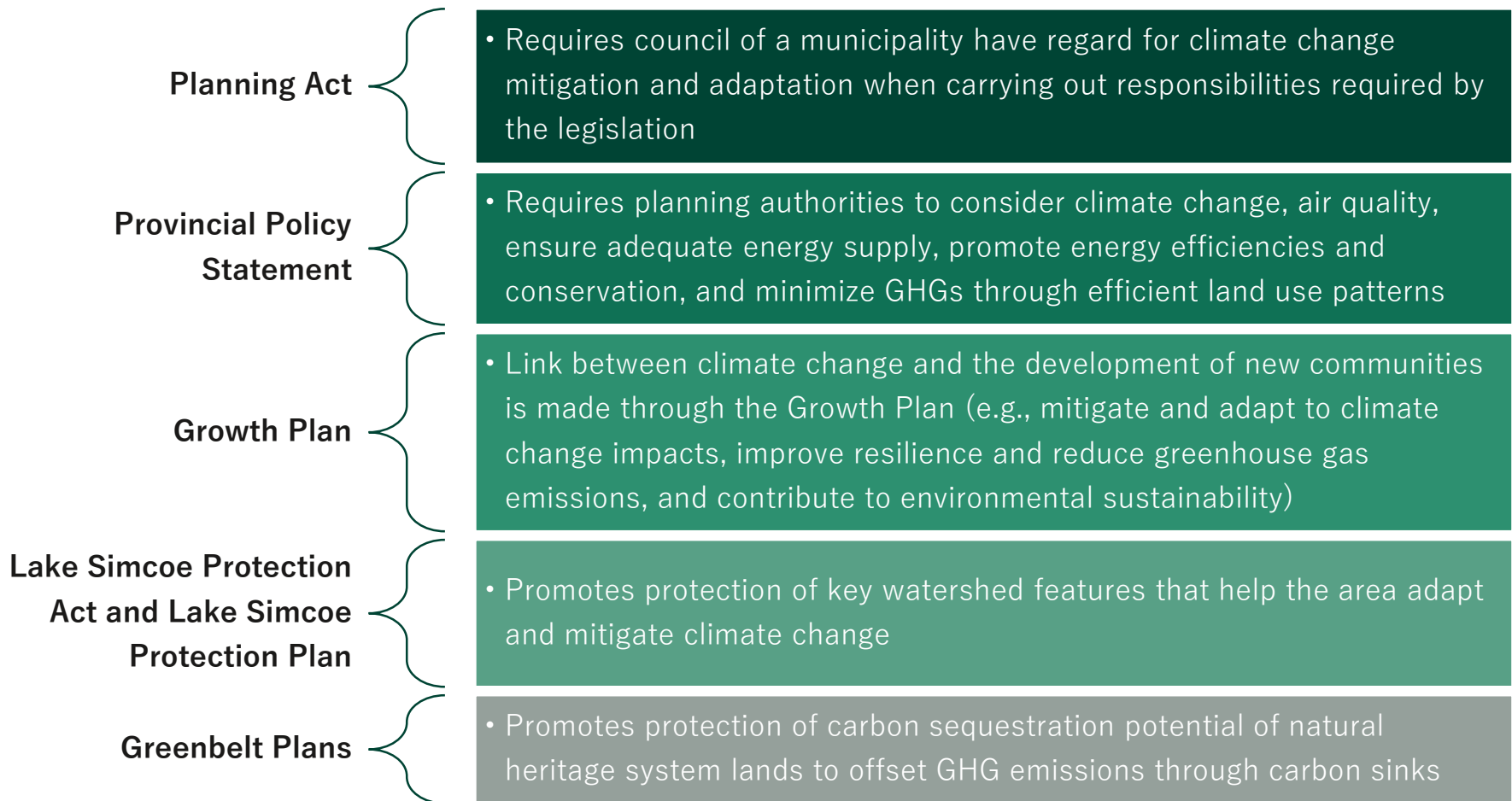


# Climate Action in Simcoe

- County is a member of Partner for Climate Change Protection (PCP) Program
  - In process of completing County-wide greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions inventory
- County is an engaged partner with with organizations and networks addressing local climate change including: Simcoe Muskoka Climate Change Exchange, Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit, Severn Sound Environmental Association, etc.
- Several local municipalities have completed Climate Change Plans, GHG emissions inventories, Energy Plans, etc.
- Conservation Authorities with jurisdiction in Simcoe have produced Climate Change Action Plans, which include extensive research/data and discuss challenges faced by municipalities as a result of climate impacts



# Climate Change Must be Considered During an Official Plan Update



# Best Practices and Lessons Learned From Other Jurisdictions

## 1. Integrate Climate Change into all Areas of Municipal Responsibility

- Support “mainstreaming” where climate change lens is applied across all areas of municipal responsibility
- Understand co-benefits of adaptation and mitigation goals

## 2. Adopt a Stand-Alone Climate Change Action Plan

- GHG emissions assessment
- Establish targets for GHG emission reduction
- Identify areas of vulnerability

## 3. Adopt Emissions Targets

- Understand current state of emissions and set goals for reduction
- Corporate carbon emissions created by municipal service areas
- Community carbon emissions created by other sectors buildings, transportation, agriculture, waste etc.

## 4. Plan for Resiliency

- Protect natural systems, provide innovative green infrastructure, proper stormwater management practices etc.
- Equity planning to address risk and vulnerabilities related to climate change

# Best Practices and Lessons Learned From Other Jurisdictions

## 5. Political Support

- Immediate and long-term
- Supported through Council priority goals and objectives
- Municipal strategic vision

## 6. Monitor Policies Over Time

- Measureable objectives linked to timeline
- Monitor progress towards achieving identified goals and targets

## 7. Focus on Public Education and Consultation

- Wide-ranging support of civic and businesses, environmental and non-environmental organizations, and community members
- Local leadership to support public awareness

## 8. Support Collaboration

- Support from upper-tier municipalities can facilitate partnerships
- Organize roles and overcome potential barriers
- Ensure climate action is coordinated throughout a geographic area

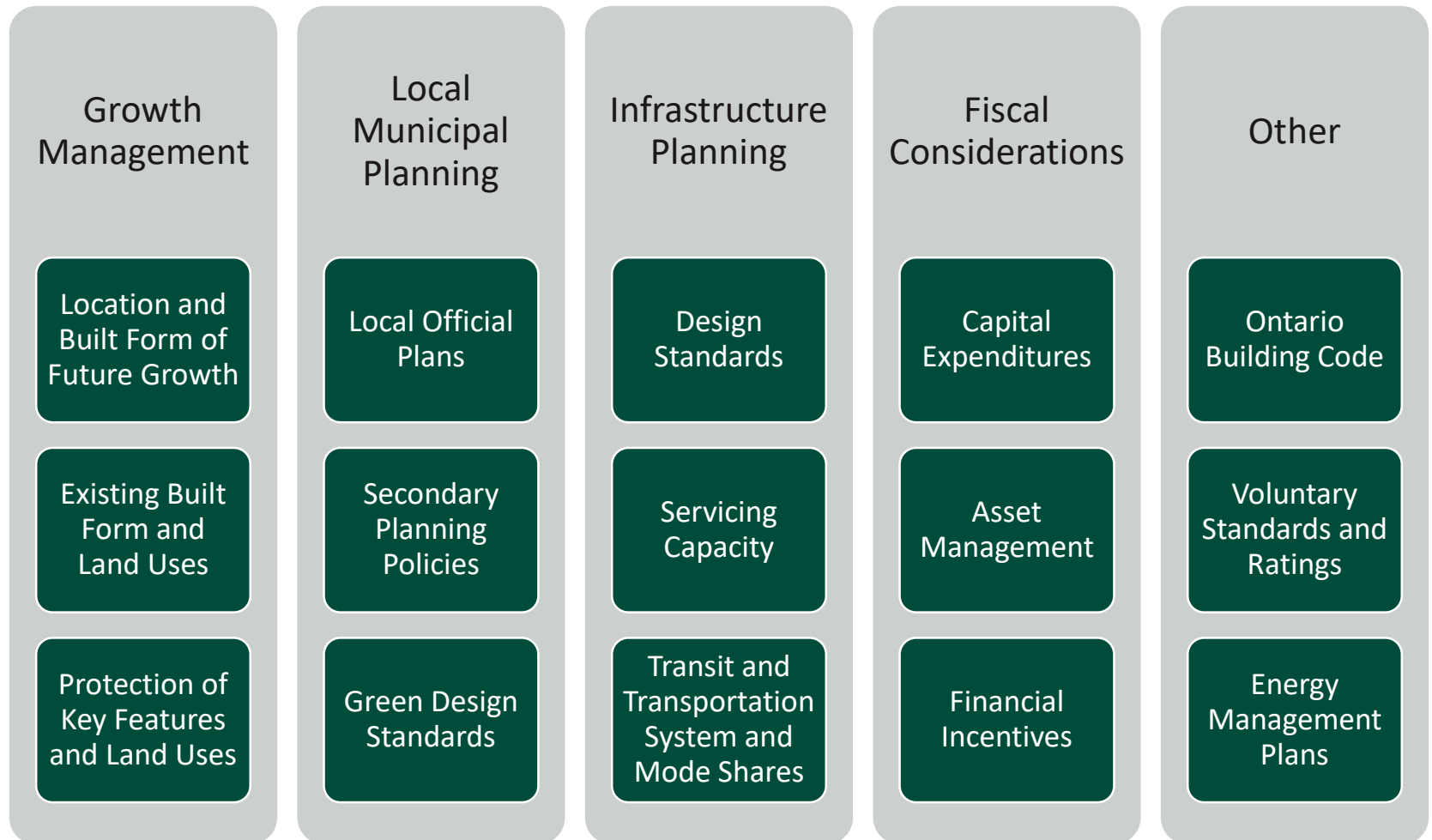


# Recommendations

## Short-term considerations for Simcoe's Municipal Comprehensive Review (MCR) Process

- Use provincial policies and guidance to update climate change policies in the Official Plan:
  - Ensure Growth Plan conformity
  - Support mitigation, adaptation and resilience in the County
- Consider potential future commitments to climate action
  - Communicate with public

# Linking Climate Change to the MCR Process and Beyond



# Recommendations

## Long-term considerations following approval of the new Official Plan (5-years +)

- Commit to a planning process to create a Simcoe County climate change approach to implementation that moves beyond general and broad policies
- Follow the identified Best Practices (or other framework)
- Model community GHG emissions and set targets
- Clearly identify the role of the County, local municipalities and other organizations in climate change action and consider implementing coordinated action to maximize benefits