

# HARNESSING CLEAN ENERGY for Economic Diversification

Since 2009, Garfield Clean Energy has been an innovative leader in advancing energy efficiency, renewable energy and clean transportation to protect the environment and build a strong, resilient and diverse economy. With the help of Xcel Energy’s Partners in Energy and CLEER, GCE is working to update the countywide Energy Action Plan that has guided its programs and services since 2017.

Over the past three months, a volunteer working group and project team has analyzed energy use trends in Garfield County and proposed updated goals and strategies. The following summarizes their recommendations. The full list of goals and strategies can be found at [GarfieldCleanEnergy.org/action-plan](https://GarfieldCleanEnergy.org/action-plan). Your input is appreciated (see survey link below).

## GOAL 1: Energy Savings in the Built Environment

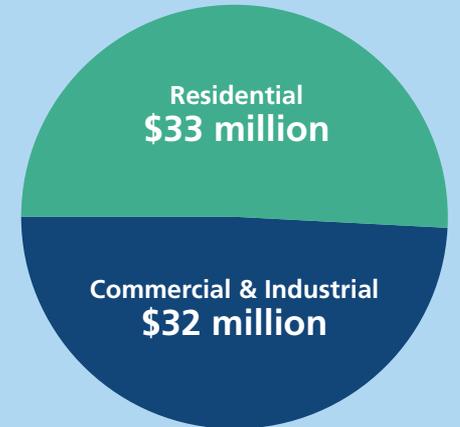
*Achieve at least 12% energy savings by 2030 over a 2019 baseline, requiring at least 1.5% savings per year. As technology and funding improves, work for increased total savings.*

Analysis shows that energy use has increased faster than population in the past five years, so achieving a 1.5% annual reduction is an ambitious goal. Yet it is doable – and good for the local economy. Energy-efficiency projects assisted by GCE to date are shaving \$2.3 million annually off the county’s collective energy bill.

**STRATEGIES INCLUDE:**

- **Ramp up** programs to help homes and businesses save energy, with additional rebates and financing
- **Expand** GCE’s innovative approach to data-driven Active Energy Management
- **Provide** technical assistance and incentives for best-practice new buildings
- **Advise** local governments on adopting the most advanced building codes

COUNTYWIDE ENERGY BILL (2019)



The total cost of energy used in Garfield County homes, businesses and industries is \$65 million annually.

## GOAL 2: Carbon-Free Electricity

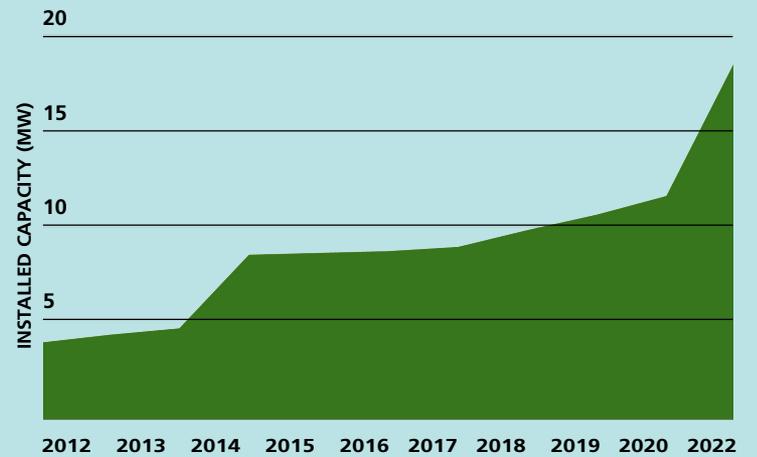
*Garfield County electricity will be 100% carbon-free by 2030 through grid-supplied resources and local renewable installations.*

Garfield County has seen dramatic growth in solar over the past decade and is regarded as a solar leader in Colorado. While utilities are working to make the grid cleaner, increased local renewables and storage will be critical for meeting the 100% goal and for realizing local resilience and economic benefits.

**STRATEGIES INCLUDE:**

- **Expand** programs such as Solarize Garfield County to help more people and businesses harness the benefits of solar
- **Seek** additional sites and opportunities for community-scale solar
- **Pursue** other local renewables including geothermal and microhydro

SOLAR ON THE RISE



Garfield County’s total solar capacity – including both net metered (rooftop) and community-scale – is now estimated at 18 MW.

## GOAL 3: Clean Mobility

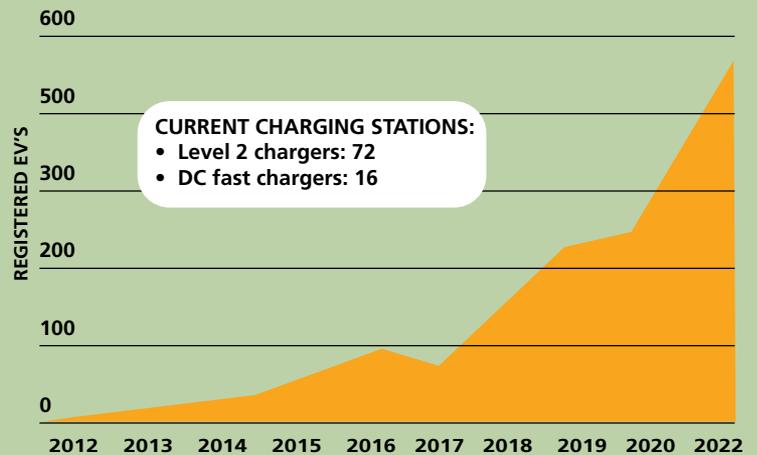
*Transition at least 15% of all registered vehicles to zero-emissions electric by 2030; support alternative fuels where electric is not yet feasible or where alt fuels are desirable; increase biking, walking and transit mode share.*

Garfield County is a leader in use of alternative fuels to date, and is a top nationwide rural county for available EV infrastructure and rate of EV ownership. The goal of 15% EVs by 2030 is tied to the state’s goal.

**STRATEGIES INCLUDE:**

- **Continue** to increase access to EV infrastructure
- **Provide** technical assistance and incentives to accelerate fleet conversions
- **Harness** state and federal funding to ensure access to EVs for all
- **Support** alternatives to driving through programs, code updates and outreach

ELECTRIC VEHICLES IN GARFIELD COUNTY



EV use in Garfield County has increased rapidly in the last several years and is poised for rapid growth.

## GOAL 4: Greenhouse Gas Emissions

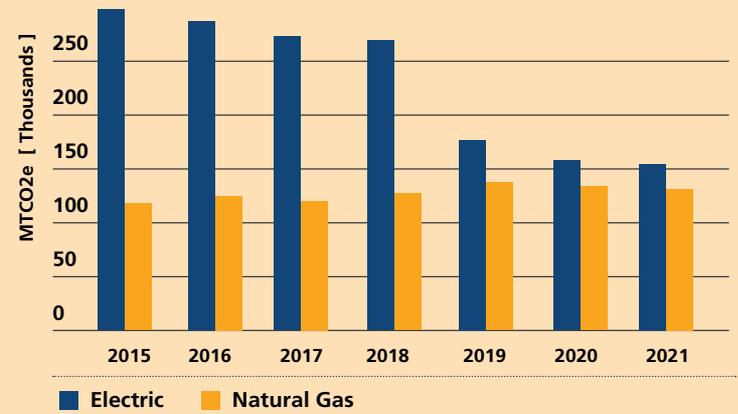
*By 2030, reduce greenhouse gas emissions due to electricity use by 100% and emissions from natural gas use by 10%.*

The working group and Partners in Energy team have recommended adding this new goal as a metric for tracking progress and to be responsive to those communities that have emissions-reduction goals. While the previous three goals contribute to reducing emissions, strategies in this goal area focus on shifting from natural gas to electricity to leverage an increasingly cleaner grid.

### STRATEGIES INCLUDE:

- **Promote** programs and incentives for building electrification
- **Work** with the natural gas industry to eliminate leakage in production and delivery
- **Work** with natural gas suppliers to increase availability of efficiency measures

### GREENHOUSE GAS TRENDS



*While emissions from electricity use are falling, natural gas emissions are still rising. Shifting the mix is key to cutting overall emissions.*

## GOAL 5: Clean Energy Economic Development and Jobs

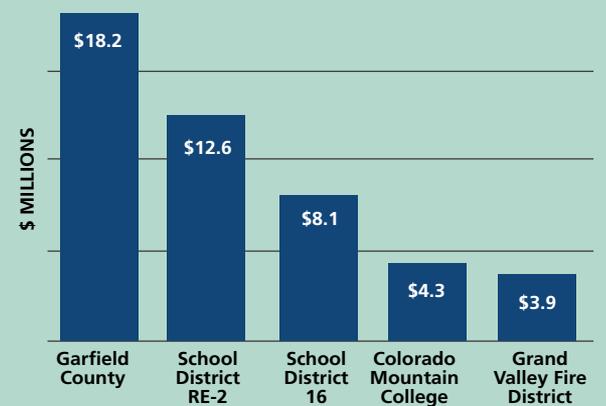
*Accelerate and harness the economic benefits of energy efficiency, clean energy and clean mobility for the benefit of the residents and communities of Garfield County, and find ways to address any economic impacts of transitioning to clean energy.*

Since 2009 GCE has offered programs that create measurable economic benefits. These benefits can be increased by ramping up programs to reach more households and businesses, focusing on local job creation and workforce training, and working with state partners to address any negative impacts resulting from energy transitions.

### STRATEGIES INCLUDE:

- **Mobilize** the funding, incentives and financing needed to implement the Energy Action Plan
- **Invest** in education, training and capacity building; identify gaps in needed skills and workforce; work with state and other partners to fill gaps
- **Pursue** policies and funding to help Garfield County address any fiscal or workforce impacts

### PROPERTY TAXES FROM OIL & GAS (2019)



*Local governments receive significant revenue from the oil and gas industry – an example of the economic impacts that must be addressed.*

## What is Garfield Clean Energy?

The purpose of Garfield Clean Energy is to help residents, businesses and local governments become more energy efficient and tap clean energy as a means to creating a stronger, more resilient economy. CLEER manages the programs and services for GCE.

GCE is a collaborative of the following entities:

- Garfield County
- Town of Parachute
- City of Rifle
- Town of Silt
- Town of New Castle
- City of Glenwood Springs
- Town of Carbondale
- Colorado Mountain College
- Roaring Fork Transportation Authority
- Holy Cross Energy

Since 2009, GCE has helped nearly 1,500 households make upgrades that now save them more than \$700,000 annually on their energy bills. Similarly, GCE has assisted in more than 450 business, nonprofit and government facility projects, generating \$1.5 million in annual savings. GCE's activities have stimulated \$50 million in local investment, and its energy-efficiency projects alone are cutting carbon emissions equivalent to taking nearly 12,000 vehicles off the road.



GCE board members touring the new solar array at CMC's Spring Valley campus.

## GIVE YOUR INPUT!

Please help refine the Energy Action Plan by completing the survey available here:



Or go to: [GarfieldCleanEnergy.org/EAP-survey](https://GarfieldCleanEnergy.org/EAP-survey). The survey closes Oct. 12.

*Survey respondents will be entered to win a free home energy assessment!*

### QUESTIONS?

Contact us at [info@GarfieldCleanEnergy.org](mailto:info@GarfieldCleanEnergy.org)



**PARTNERS IN ENERGY**  
An Xcel Energy Community Collaboration

