

Advocating for Local Municipalities to Join the Greenest Region Compact

On November 28, 2022, the Roselle Village Board of Trustees unanimously adopted the [Greenest Region Compact](#) (GRC) through municipal resolution. A coalition that included the League of Women Voters of Roselle-Bloomingtondale, Green Roselle and members of the Lake Park High School Earth Club advocated for the resolution through informational presentations, public comments, and attendance at village board meetings.

With this resolution, Roselle joins 142 other Chicagoland municipalities that leverage the strength of local governments to collaboratively build vibrant, sustainable communities. It is the largest regional sustainability collaborative for municipalities in the country. The GRC is a framework of 49-high-level choices that fall into ten sustainability categories: climate, economic development, energy, land, leadership, mobility, municipal operations, sustainable communities, water, and waste & recycling. These choices are aligned with local, regional, national and international sustainability goals--and were developed through consensus input from members of the Metropolitan Mayors Caucus. The Greenest Region Compact is intended to spur municipal action and support mayors in their role as environmental leaders.

One of the most powerful public goods a government can provide is environmental sustainability. Sustainability is defined as meeting the needs of the current generation without compromising the ability for future generations to meet those same needs. Members of the coalition, led by Green Roselle, reviewed the GRC framework and intend to volunteer their time to help the village advance and achieve its sustainability plans.

The League of Women Voters of Roselle-Bloomingtondale will work to encourage other municipalities in our service area to join the Greenest Region Compact through education, coalition-building, and advocacy.

League of Women Voters of the United States Position on Environment and Natural Resources

The League of Women Voters of the United States believes that natural resources should be managed as interrelated parts of life-supporting ecosystems. Resources should be conserved and protected to assure their future availability. Pollution of these resources should be controlled in order to preserve the physical, chemical, and biological integrity of ecosystems and to protect public health.

Background

Sustainability is growing increasingly more important due to a decline in crucial resources and an increase in natural disasters. Local sustainability matters tremendously because change and progress is easier to realize locally. The collective impact of municipalities and county governments nationwide can dramatically decrease our environmental footprint. Costs vary, but larger cost items can combine the pocketbooks of the county, state and federal government with the accountability and stewardship of local ones through grants. Plus, sustainable government workflows like paperless filing are better for the environment and save time and money.

Urban systems are part of a broader, interconnected city-region territory. Since municipalities largely have control over land use and development, they can implement sustainable zoning practices with a precision that county, state, or federal governments can't match. Studies show that zoning ordinances should be updated to encourage sustainable development, as older ordinances are simply too outdated to incorporate new eco-friendly technologies.

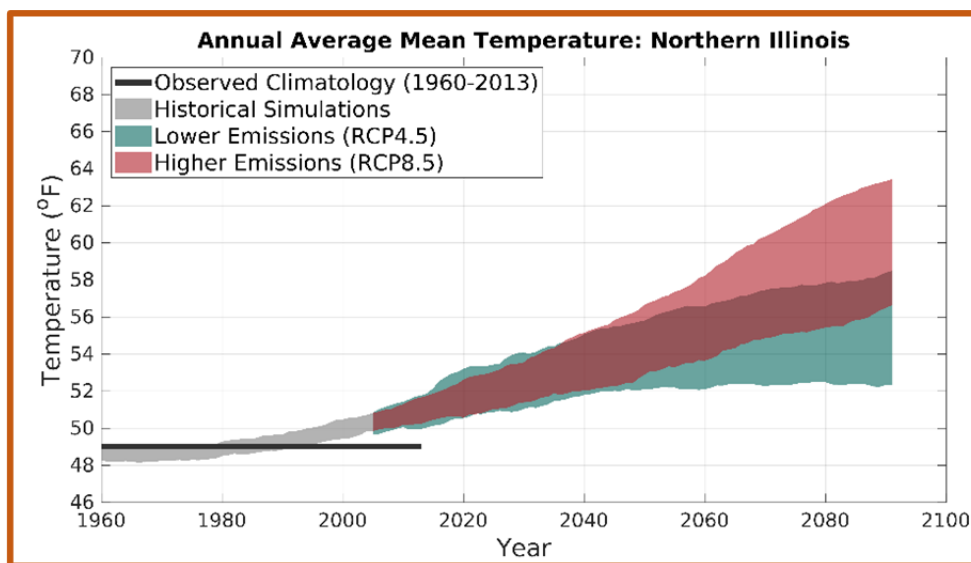
A growing number of concerned citizens care about our local environment. Among them are talented individuals looking to serve their communities by providing critical services to municipalities that do not have the resources to dedicate significant staff time to sustainability issues.

Climate change has long been a threat, but for many young people, that threat—and governments' failure to take action to fix it are taking a mental toll. The younger generation is faced with grim facts about a warming planet, and it contributes to the epidemic of anxiety faced by our young. Young voters broke turnout records in 2018 and 2020. Generation Z and millennial voters already make up nearly 40 percent of the electorate. Concern for the planet is a major motivator for this generation. Young voters understand they will bear the consequences tomorrow for inattention to sustainability issues today.

Event Video: The Impact of Climate Change in Chicago and Illinois

The League of Women Voters of Roselle-Bloomington (LWVRB) began its advocacy initiative with an informational presentation on what climate change will look like in our area and the role our local governments can play in achieving effective environmental policy solutions. Featured speakers included Donald J. Wuebbles, Ph.D., The Harry E. Preble Professor of Atmospheric Sciences at the University of Illinois and Presidential Fellow, Edith Makra, Director of Environmental Initiatives for the Metropolitan Mayors Caucus and David Pileski, Mayor of Roselle. A [video of the Climate Change Local Action Plan presentation](#) can be found on the LWVRB website.

To summarize Dr. Wuebbles' presentation, the climate of Illinois is changing very rapidly, with significant impacts on urban and rural areas and sectors. Scientists have recorded a 1.8 °F increase in Illinois-averaged temperature, with most coming from nighttime temperature increase. Projections for the future are below:



In our area we can expect:

- Heat waves that are increasing in number and intensity
- Severe weather that increases in intensity
- An Increasing risk of floods, which threaten our homes and businesses
- Worsening air and water quality
- Public health impacts such as:
 - Increased tick and mosquito diseases
 - respiratory problems from mold
 - Worsening allergies and asthma

Impact on other parts of the US affect us as well:

- The Southeast and Southwest will experience increasing intensity of droughts which will affect our food supply.
- Increase in the number of large wildfires, increasing intensity of hurricanes and increase in tornado outbreaks raises property insurance rates and strains federal disaster relief funding.

Become a Climate Optimist

Every generation can alter their daily habits and become advocates for decarbonization at the individual, local, state, and national level. Green America promotes 10 ways consumers can tackle climate change, including eliminating food waste, eating a more plant-based diet, using LED lighting, and improving insulation.

Faith communities have become a leading voice on climate change. Last year, the first papal encyclical was dedicated wholly to the environment, along with declarations on climate change from Buddhist, Muslim, and Jewish leaders. Faith in Place partners with houses of worship to create Green Teams. Green Teams connect spiritual practices with climate change solutions and inspire their faith communities to incorporate environmental consciousness into all activities.

Help the League of Women Voters advocate for all local municipalities to join the Greenest Region Compact, which now includes the [Metropolitan Mayors Caucus' 2021 Climate Action Plan for the Chicago Region](#)--one of the first regional climate plans in the United States.

Hawaii transformed itself from relying heavily on fossil fuels to leading on renewables, instituting laws to encourage the shift. Illinois followed suit by passing the Clean Energy Jobs Act.

Citizens Climate Lobby has more than 420 chapters across the US, building support in Congress for a national, bipartisan solution to climate change. CCL also supports over 150 international chapters on six continents. Real solutions require recycling more material in the supply chain, cutting out plastics, and revamping manufacturing processes and product designs.

It is up to all of us to protect the environment we will pass on to our children and our children's children.

For more Information

An assessment of the current and projected impacts of climate change on the State of Illinois was prepared by Don Wuebbles, Jim Angel, and 43 other experts. To access the Illinois assessment report, please visit [Tackling Climate Change in Illinois](#) sponsored by The Nature Conservancy.