

Montgomery County, MD -- Under2 MOU Appendix

Profile

Montgomery County, MD, with an estimated population of 1,044,000, is the largest jurisdiction in the State of Maryland. The County borders Washington, DC, and has a land area of 491 square miles including urban centers such as Gaithersburg, Rockville, Silver Spring and Bethesda, as well as the 93,000-acre Agricultural Reserve, a designated land use zone created in 1980 to preserve farm land and rural space in the northwestern part of the County.

Montgomery County is highly diverse and over the last decade became a “majority minority” jurisdiction. Over 32 percent of the County’s residents are foreign-born, and within the Montgomery County Public Schools system students speak 138 different languages and represent 157 countries. It ranks first among large counties nationwide in overall educational attainment, with 58 percent of residents having earned a Bachelor’s degree or higher.

Montgomery County has over 27,000 employer establishments with a total annual payroll of \$26.7 billion. As of March 2016, at-place employment in the County was estimated to be 459,000. Key business sectors include biotechnology, cyber-security, federal government agencies, information technology, healthcare, financial services and hospitality/tourism.

Targets

In Montgomery County’s 2009 Climate Protection Plan, the County committed to reducing Countywide greenhouse gas emissions to 80% below the base year of FY05 including a plan to stop increasing Countywide GHGs by 2010 and achieve a 10% reduction every five years through 2050.

While the County has a comprehensive approach to reducing GHG emissions Countywide, it is particularly focused on commercial and residential building energy use since this sector uses roughly 66 trillion Btu of energy annually. Emissions associated with building energy use have dropped by more than 23% from an estimated 7.2 MMTCO_{2e} in 2005 to 5.5 MMTCO_{2e} in FY16.

County Government emission reduction goals are the same as its Countywide goals of 80% by 2050. Since 2005, County Government has reduced its GHG emissions by 67% from 114,000 MTCO_{2e} to 37,755 MTCO_{2e} in FY16.

Tools

Commercial Building Energy Benchmarking – First county in the nation to pass a building energy benchmarking law, which became effective in February 2016. It requires commercial building owners with 50,000 gross square footage or more to report their building energy use annually for public disclosure.

Commercial PACE Financing – Adopted in 2015 to help commercial property owners finance energy-saving upgrades through a property tax surcharge repaid over the life of the upgrade, potentially financing up to 100% of the cost and for up to 20 years.

Green Bank – Created through legislation in 2015, the Montgomery County Green Bank’s sole purpose is to increase investment and implementation of energy improvements across all sectors in the County. The Bank, still in its developmental stage, will use its seed capital to spur private capital investment, provide unique programs to

target and open new markets to energy-saving investments, and contribute to a growing regional market of energy financing.

Energy Efficiency and Environmental Design Requirements -- Enacted in March 2007, the law requires that all new public and private buildings greater than 10,000 square feet be LEED Silver (public) and LEED certified (private). Private building owners are eligible for property and special service tax credits based on a building achieving one of 10 qualified ratings for energy efficient buildings, most of which are tied to a Gold or Platinum LEED rating.

Expedited Solar Permitting – Legislation passed in 2014 to fast track solar installations on single detached residences. Local solar installations are also exempt from the County’s Fuel Energy Tax, which applies to fossil-fuel generated electricity and other building fuels.

Forest Conservation Law – Established in 1992, the law aims to save, maintain and plant forested areas. Since its inception, the Montgomery County Planning Department has approved development applications that have permanently protected some 9,000 acres of existing forest and 2,000 acres of newly planted forests, and mapped more than 3,000 forest conservation easements.

Tree Canopy Law – Legislation passed in 2014 which requires property owners to plant, or pay into a fund to support the planting of, new shade trees during development. Funds generated from the law are used to plant 500 to 600 trees annually at single family homes, around parking lots, and in multi-family communities.

Clean Electricity -- Since 2016, the County began purchasing 100% of its electricity supply from clean sources and is also purchasing additional carbon offsets for building fuel oil and natural gas use. Since 2004 it has led a coalition of county agencies and municipalities to purchase electricity supply generated from wind energy. The County-led purchasing group currently ranks 4th among local governments and 15th among all national clean energy purchasers tracked by the EPA’s Green Power Partnership.

Car Fleet -- The County Government has a total of 243 electric and gasoline/electric hybrid vehicles, including 16 new Chevrolet Bolt electric vehicles with chargers to serve up to 29 vehicles simultaneously throughout the County. Idle-reduction software has been installed on 35 additional vehicles.

Solar Installation on County Facilities – County Government has installed over 5 megawatts of solar photovoltaic panels on public facilities and is expected to exceed 11 megawatts by 2018.

Resilient Public Facilities – Montgomery County will complete its first two microgrids in 2018 at its Public Safety Headquarters and Montgomery County Correctional Facility. Both facilities will be enhanced with a combination of solar energy, advanced controls, and efficient combined heat and power systems that convert electricity into natural gas. These facilities will be able to deliver key public services during prolonged utility outages while reducing greenhouse gas emissions and energy consumption.

Bus Fleet and Ridership – The County’s Department of Transportation operates the region’s second largest bus service – Ride On -- that serves 26 million passengers a year, and by the fall of 2017, will have 370 buses, 100 percent of which will be hybrid electric, compressed natural gas or clean diesel.

Bike Trails and Lanes -- The County has approximate 436 miles of hard and natural surface bike trails and lanes for commuting and recreation.