

08-16-23 ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION MEETING AGENDA

PREPARED 06-20-23

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Date: Wednesday, August 16, 2023

Time: 6:00 pm

Place: Conference Room on 10<sup>th</sup> floor of City Hall, 161 W Michigan Avenue, Jackson, Michigan

I. Call to Order

II. Roll Call

III. Adoption of the Agenda

IV. Approval of the minutes for the 05-17-23 and 06-21-23 meetings.

V. New Business

a) Evaluation of Environmental Action Plan (EAP)

VI. Old Business

a) Mayor's Request for Sustainability Plan

VII. 2023 Priority Issues (discussion)

a) Urban forestry

b) Land use / pollinators

c) Energy efficiency and inventory

VIII. Citizen Comments (3 minute limit)

IX. Commissioner Comments

X. Next Meeting – Wednesday, 09-20-23 at 6:00pm

XI. Adjournment

# ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION 05-17-23 MEETING

## MINUTES (PREPARED 05-18-23)

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Date: Wednesday, May 17, 2023

Time: 6:00 pm

Place: Conference Room on 10<sup>th</sup> floor of City Hall, 161 W Michigan Avenue, Jackson, Michigan

*I. Call to Order Chairperson Kazmier called the meeting to order at 6:02 pm.*

#### **II. Roll Call**

**Present:** *Commissioner Jane Flores  
Commissioner Kelsey Heck Wood  
Commissioner Jacob Inosencio  
Commissioner Kelli Kazmier (Chair)  
Commissioner Conner Wood*

**Absent:** *Commissioner Will Forgrave (Sixth Ward Councilmember)  
Commissioner Kevin Lund*

**Staff:** *Troy R White, City of Jackson Engineering*

**Also Present:** *John Haynes, Dahlem Conservancy  
Kim Haynes, Dahlem Conservancy  
Andrew Johnson (appointed to Commission for a term to commence 06-01-23)  
Hannah Schauer, Dahlem Conservancy*

#### **III. Adoption of the Agenda**

*Motion made by Commissioner Wood and seconded by Commissioner Heck Wood to approve the agenda as presented approved unanimously.*

#### **IV. Approval of 04-19-23 meeting minutes**

*Motion made by Commissioner Inosencio and seconded by Commissioner Wood to approve the minutes as presented approved unanimously.*

#### **V. New Business**

*None.*

## **VI. Old Business**

### *a) Mayor's Request for Development of a Sustainability Plan*

*Commissioner Inosencio reported that he, Commissioner Flores, the Mayor and Jessica Henry of the Mayor's office met to discuss and clarify the Mayor's request – is the Mayor looking to replace the current Environmental Action Plan (EAP), supplement it or revise and evolve it? It was determined that the EAP needs to be revised to more fully address current priorities.*

*Commissioner Inosencio reported that the next step will be a follow up meeting to determine the framework for the revision of the EAP. Once the framework is established, it will be brought for review and approval by the Environmental Commission. Once the framework is approved, work on revisions of the text will commence.*

*Commissioner Kazmier reported that she had communicated with the City Manager. She learned that the City is preparing a grant application for an urban forestry initiative that would include a forestry consultant.*

*Commissioner Inosencio reported that setting one, three and five year goals in the EAP was part of the conversation with the Mayor.*

*Commissioner Kazmier reported that she requested in her communication with the City Manager that vacant city-owned lots be identified for potential use for pollinator gardens. City staff will review and sort lots over the summer.*

*Commissioner Kazmier reported that she also discussed sustainable procurement with the City Manager. She suggested that a sustainable procurement initiative could provide a framework for choices and decision that will have a long-term impact. The City Manager is currently gathering info.*

## **VII. 2023 Priority Issues**

### *a) Urban Forestry*

*No discussion.*

### *b) Land Use and Pollinators*

*Mr. Haynes related that there is a 34 acre pollinator meadow at the Dahlem property and that a grant has been secured to plant another 34 acres of the same.*

*Mr. Haynes related that Dahlem supports No Mow May, that No Mow May is a step towards the Bee City USA designation and it helps brand the city as environmentally friendly.*

*Mr. Haynes related that it will require action by city leadership to obtain the Bee City USA designation - a resolution of support from City Council, the establishment of a committee (the Environmental Committee potentially) and a designated department to implement and report on pollinator-conscious practices and plans.*

*Mr. Haynes related that the Bee City USA designation will require a reduction in pesticide use.*

*Mr. Haynes suggested that the Dahlem Conservancy could partner with the City to fulfill the education requirement of the Bee City USA designation. Dahlem's Birds, Bee and Butterflies event is an opportunity to educate the public about pollinators. This year's event will be on August twelfth.*

*Commissioner Kazmier suggested a partnership that includes the library to do a story walk around pollinators.*

*Commissioner Inosencio suggested the gardens at the King Center as a venue for a story walk.*

*Commissioner Kazmier reported that she discussed the Tree City USA designation with the City Manager. She reported that he is amenable to assigning staff to the effort.*

*Commissioner Inosencio suggested that when rewriting the City's tree code, a directive for the Commission to pursue the Tree City USA and Bee City USA designations be included.*

*Commissioner Inosencio suggested that the ordinance that established the Environmental Commission be revisited to update the directives to the Commission.*

*Kelli stated that the Commission is an advisory body of volunteers that has been productive lately but has not always been so productive. A divided board might struggle with more ambitious directives.*

*Mr. Haynes suggested that a resolution by City Council would be an opportunity for Council to approve Commission recommendations. He stated that the goal is to create pollinator crop volume and that certain trees provide a disproportionately large amount of pollinator forage volume compared to wildflower acreage.*

*Commissioner Kazmier suggested that goals set as part of the Bee City USA designation would be something to work towards and that it would be useful to consult with an expert in determining goals and actions to meet those goals.*

*Mr. Haynes suggested that local USDA staff could be a resource.*

*Commissioner Inosencio stated that there is currently a process underway for the DPW to use vacant lots for nurseries to grow trees. If those trees can be flowering trees, that would be a good thing.*

*Mr. Johnson inquired about the visual for a pollinator garden on a vacant lot within a neighborhood. Mr. Haynes replied that it would look like a meadow. Mr. Johnson asked if the sidewalk and parkway would stay open. Mr. Haynes replied in the affirmative. Mr. Haynes stated that each garden could be maintained at the level that best suits the area – some may need to be kept tidy and mowed down on occasion and other allowed to grow taller.*

*Commissioner Kazmier suggested that pollinator gardens are not a large investment so there can be experimentation and expansion over time.*

*c) Energy Efficiency and Inventory*

*None.*

### **VIII. Citizen Comments**

*Peter Bormuth of 142 W Pearl Street spoke regarding 1) support for the inclusion of flowering trees in planning, 2) support for more cooperation and cooperation between the City and County regarding the County's Sparks Park and Keely Park which are located within the City, 3) rule changes at the state level to allow property owners to kill animals, particularly beavers, on their property and the negative impact this will have on wetlands and 4) changes to the mining permitting process to move authority from local agencies to EGLE.*

### **IX. Commissioner Comments**

*Commissioner Wood stated that he will share land use reform proposals at the next meeting.*

### **X. Next Meeting – Wednesday, 06-21-23 at 6:00pm**

### **XI. Adjournment**

*Motion made by Commissioner Wood and seconded by Commissioner Inosencio to adjourn approved unanimously. Meeting ended at 6:46 pm.*

**ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION 06-21-23 MEETING**

**MINUTES (PREPARED 06-20-23)**

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*The Environmental Commission meeting scheduled for 6:00 pm on Wednesday, June 21, 2023 was cancelled due to a lack of quorum.*

# Jackson Environmental Action Plan

## An Evaluation of Overall Process and Plan Quality

Graham Diedrich, Michigan State University

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### Executive Summary

In the U.S. and around the world, increasing attention has been given to local governments and their role in climate adaptation and mitigation. This report evaluates nine local climate action plans in the state of Michigan, utilizing a multi-criteria framework and numerical rankings to quantify plan progress and content quality. Specific attention is given to key concepts underpinning the environmental justice (EJ) framework, such as procedural and distributive justice.

In 2023, the City of Jackson published its Environmental Action Plan. The plan outlines challenges, goals, objectives, and strategies pertaining to seven themes: 1) waste management, 2) protection of water resources, 3) energy efficiency, 4) resource management, 5) transportation, 6) sustainable land use, and 7) community engagement. Figure 1 outlines where the plan ranks amongst other municipalities considered in this study, based upon overall progress and plan quality. Here, it is important to note that Jackson is one of only a handful of localities in the state with an environmental action plan, placing it ahead of 90% of other municipalities not reviewed in this study. In general, the Environmental Action Plan provides a solid foundation for climate policy development and planning. However, there remains opportunities to build upon this utility. This can be accomplished by:

- Presenting more descriptive, quantitative, and localized analyzes.
- Using this information to develop policies which address local conditions.
- Detailing implementation components (e.g., cost, implementing body, stakeholders)

Subsequent sections introduce the outcome criteria, evaluation categories, and coding system used for this analysis. Next, the results of the evaluation are presented. Finally, the report presents key takeaways and suggestions for further policy development.

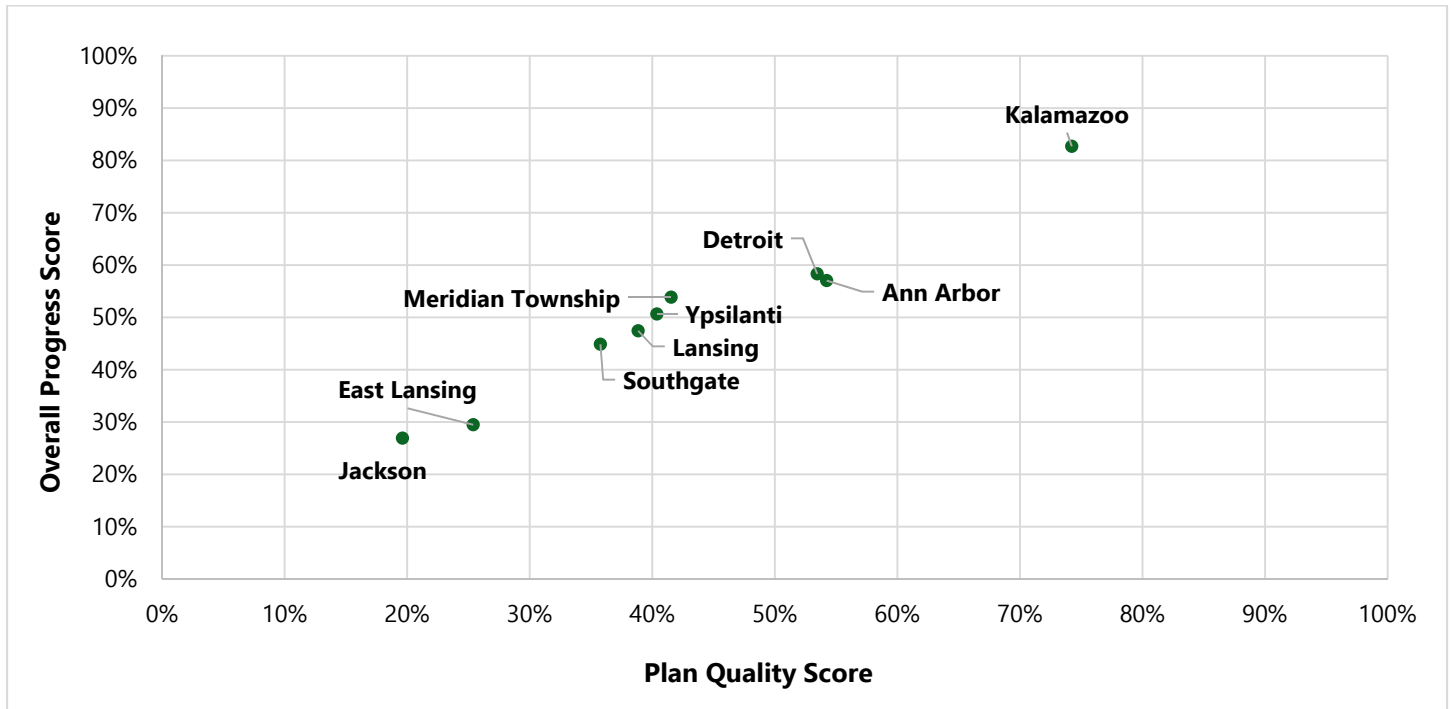


Figure 1. Municipal plan rankings.

## Methodology

The [Climate Policies and Action of Michigan Cities](#) database managed by the Michigan Climate Action Network (MiCAN) helped to identify municipalities with local climate action plans. After conducting a preliminary document analysis of each policy and action listed, it was determined that nine localities have local plans. The approaches developed by Tang et al. (2010) and Baker et al. (2012) were utilized to evaluate the climate resiliency and environmental justice components of these plans.

## Outcome Criteria

This study evaluates thirteen outcome criteria (Table 1) against two evaluative categories: overall progress and plan quality. As in Baker et al. (2012), outcome criteria reflect the ideal outcomes plans should strive to achieve though the assessment of issues and implementation of climate policies at the local level. These criteria can be divided into eight key topics: water, air, energy, transportation, weather, ecosystems, solid waste, and environmental justice.

Topic	Outcome Criteria
Water	C1. Improved water quantity and quality.
Air	C2. Improved air quality.
	C3. Reduced GHG and other gaseous emissions.
Energy	C4. Increased utilization of clean energy.



	C5. Reduced energy use through efficiency savings.
Transportation	C6. Improved access to sustainable transportation.
	C7. Enhanced opportunities for human powered transportation.
Weather	C8. Improved resiliency towards extreme weather events.
Ecosystems	C9. Expanded green space and urban forests.
	C10. Improved genetic, species, and/or ecosystem diversity.
Solid Waste	C11. Decreased municipal waste as recycling, reuse, and/or other programs are expanded.
Environmental Justice	C12. Increased community involvement in environmental decision-making.
	C13. Establishment of an equitable distribution of environmental resources, benefits, and costs.

Table 1. Outcome criteria for evaluating local climate plans.

## Evaluation Categories

Outcome criteria were evaluated against two categories: overall progress and plan quality. Overall progress is informed by the *awareness-analysis-action* (AAA) framework proposed in Tang et al. (2010). In this case, *awareness* refers to acknowledging the causes and consequences of climate change. *Analysis* involves the interrogation and synthesis of relevant information. *Action* means applying this information to develop localized policies.

Meanwhile, plan quality determines plans ability to describe, localize, and build policy upon climate resiliency and environmental justice concepts. Five plan components established by Baker et al. (2012) are utilized: the information base; vision, goals, and objectives; options and priorities; actions; and implementation, monitoring, and evaluations. Table 2 describes these components in further detail.

Plan Components	Description
Information base	Discussion of current and future conditions (e.g., ecological, environmental, economic, social, agricultural) influenced by climate change. Includes data and analysis of local assets and natural resources, identification of non-climate determinants of vulnerability, and/or vulnerability and risk assessments.
Vision, goals and objectives	Long term vision of how the community will adapt to and mitigate climate impacts, including the statement of quantifiable objectives and targets aimed at conserving and equitably distributing resources in a climate-stressed world.
Options and priorities	Development, consideration, assessment and prioritization of alternative climate solutions. Includes opportunities for public engagement and stakeholder considerations.
Actions	Principles to guide land use decisions, energy investments, infrastructure projects, and more to achieve goals. Includes spatial designs, policies and/or strategies for implementation.
Implementation, monitoring, and evaluation	Resources and personnel directed to achieve successful plan implementation, monitoring, and evaluation commitments. Includes the development of a holistic,

	integrated climate approach aimed at connecting different policy areas (e.g., transportation, planning, parks and recreation); as well as data reporting mechanisms.
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Table 2. Plan quality components.

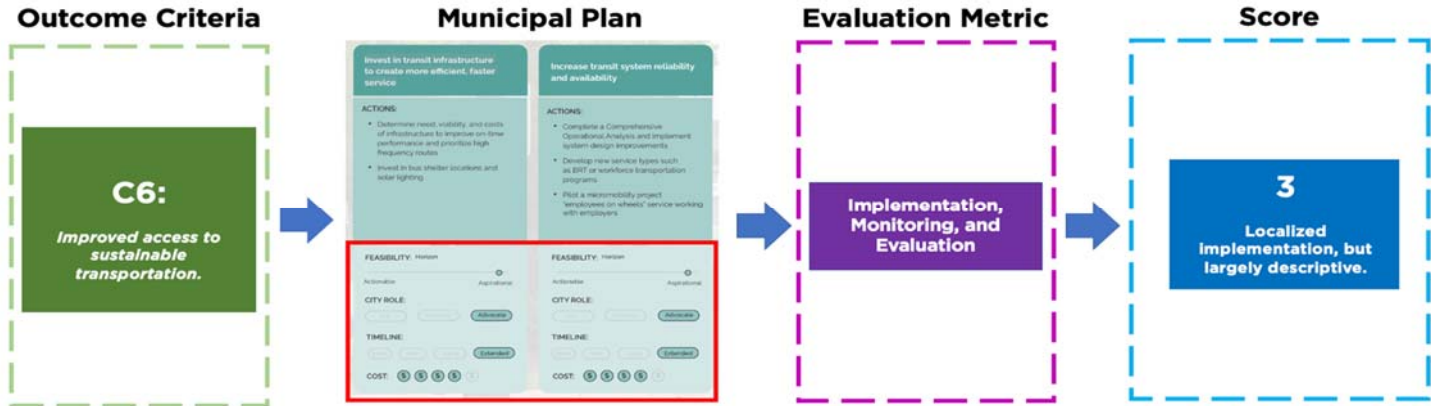
**Coding System**

In order to assess the extent of the outcome criteria present, the coding system assigns values to the evaluation categories. Each of the outcome criteria were compared against these categories, with the juxtaposition being quantified on a five-point scale, as demonstrated in Table 3.

Score	Description
0	No mention of outcome criteria in plan.
1	Outcome criteria mentioned, but with little to no detail.
2	Outcome criteria mentioned, includes a description, and moderate level of detail.
3	The criterion is mentioned and includes a limited level of locally specific application. However, it is still largely descriptive.
4	A detailed analysis of the criterion is provided and it is addressed in a locally specific manner using a variety of tools such as vulnerability, exposure and/or risk assessments, maps, fieldwork, GIS analysis and modelling and local climate scenario modelling.

Table 3. Coding system for evaluation.

Figure 2 demonstrates the operationalization of the coding system. Sustainable transportation (C6) is selected as the outcome criteria (in green). The municipal plan is then consulted to find any elements related to achieving access to sustainable transportation systems. Once identified (in red), this is compared against a relevant evaluation component, in this case implementation, monitoring, and evaluation (in purple). Because this particular plan accounts for feasibility,



the role of the city, timeline, costs, and other implementation metrics in a localized fashion lacking quantitative measures, a score of 3 is awarded (in blue).

This process was conducted for each plan amongst all outcome criteria, in relation to the two evaluation categories

Figure 2. Example of coding system in action.

described above. This allowed for aggregate level and individual plan evaluations. The highest possible score for each AAA category and plan quality component is 52 (i.e., thirteen outcome criteria, with a maximum score of 4). The high

possible for overall progress is 156 (i.e., 52 multiplied by the number of AAA categories), while the highest possible score for overall plan quality is 260 (i.e., 52 multiplied by the number of plan quality components). Meanwhile, the highest possible score an individual outcome criteria can attain is 32 (i.e., eight evaluation metrics, with a maximum score of 4). Results are displayed as a percentage of the highest possible score.

## Results

### Outcome Criteria

Awareness, analysis, and action categories were used to gauge progress towards climate adaptation and mitigation. The awareness category received the highest score (40% of total possible), while the other two categories received 12% and 29% respectively. Figure 3 shows the aggregate overall progress score, which adds the awareness, analysis, and action scores for each outcome criteria. This results indicate that, on average, the Detroit Sustainability Action Agenda is moderately aware of climate issues, yet faces some difficulties in producing analytical outputs and localized policy proposals for some focus areas. For a breakdown by outcome criteria, please consult the Appendix.

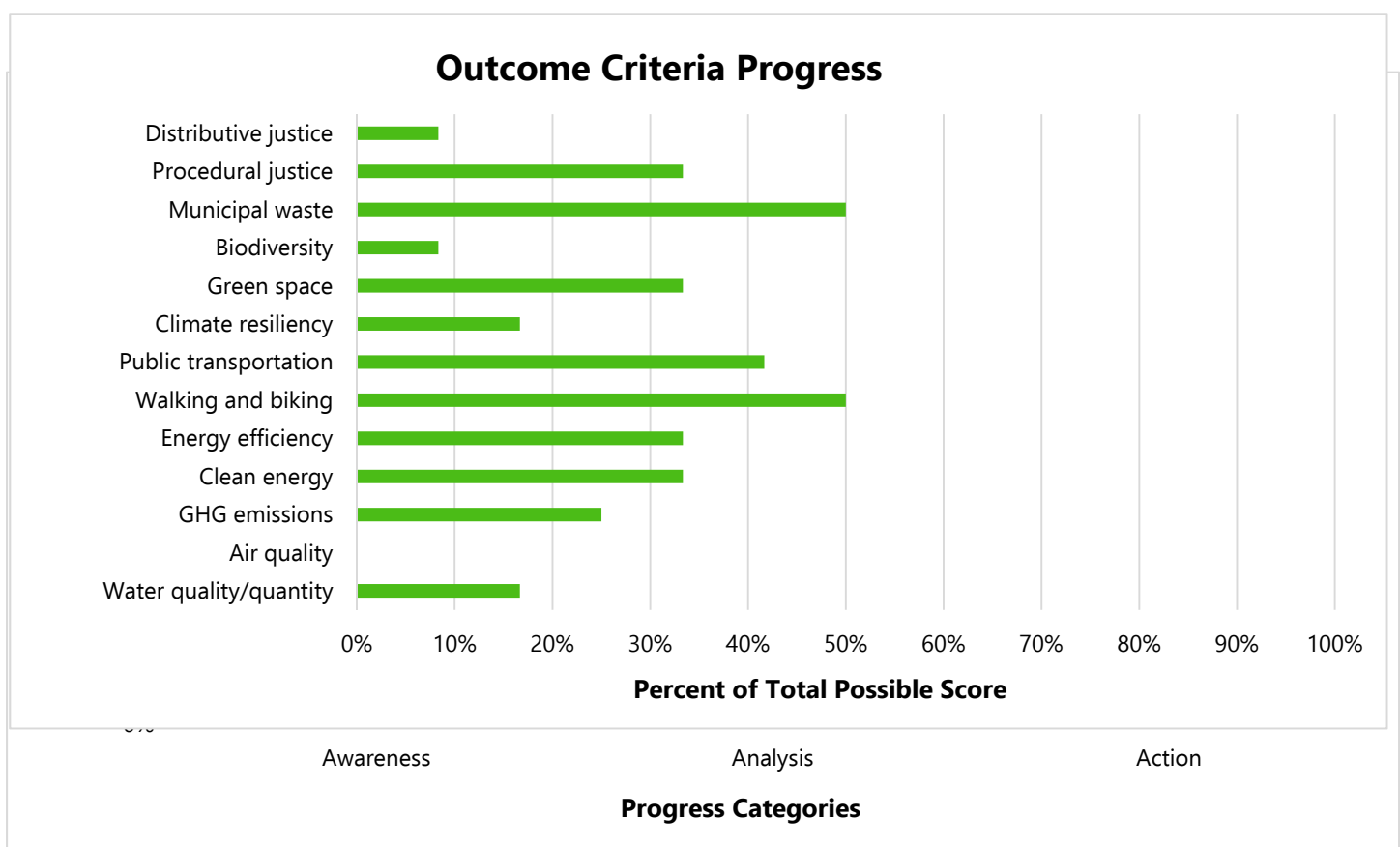


Figure 3. Overall progress for all outcome criteria evaluated.

As shown in Figure 4, municipal waste (C11) and human-powered transportation (C7) received the highest overall progress score (50%), followed by public transportation (C6) at 42%. The plan showed general awareness and limited analysis for these focus areas. For instance, the plan notes that “continuously increasing trash waste is unsustainable” and that “according to the [EPA], 139 million tons of trash were sent to landfills and only 35.2 percent of municipal solid waste was recycled or composted in 2017” (City of Jackson, 2023). While the plan acknowledges that municipal waste is a key issue, it does so without pointing to community-level conditions. Likewise, the information cited from the EPA does not pertain to Jackson, and is rather an aggregate view of the entire nation.

Finally, air quality (C2) was the lowest scoring outcome criteria (0%), followed closely by biodiversity (C10) and distributive justice (C13) at 8%. Reducing air quality was not mentioned in the plan, making it unable to be scored. Additionally, the plan only makes passing mentions of enhancing biodiversity and addressing environmental injustices, without providing localized accounts, analyses, or policy actions.

### Plan Quality

This section focuses on performance amongst five plan components which determine the ability to describe, localize, and build policy. Essentially, what makes a plan useable, dynamic, and relevant in the short, medium, and long-term. Below, Figure 5 outlines the aggregate scores amongst all assessed outcome criteria. The actions component received the highest score out of the five, at 29% of the total possible score. Meanwhile, the lowest scoring was information base at 10%. The results in Figure 5 indicate that, on average, most outcome criteria had limited information pertaining to past, current, and future environmental conditions within Jackson. These components could be improved with sufficiently localized information gleaned from community analyses. For full results, please consult the Appendix.

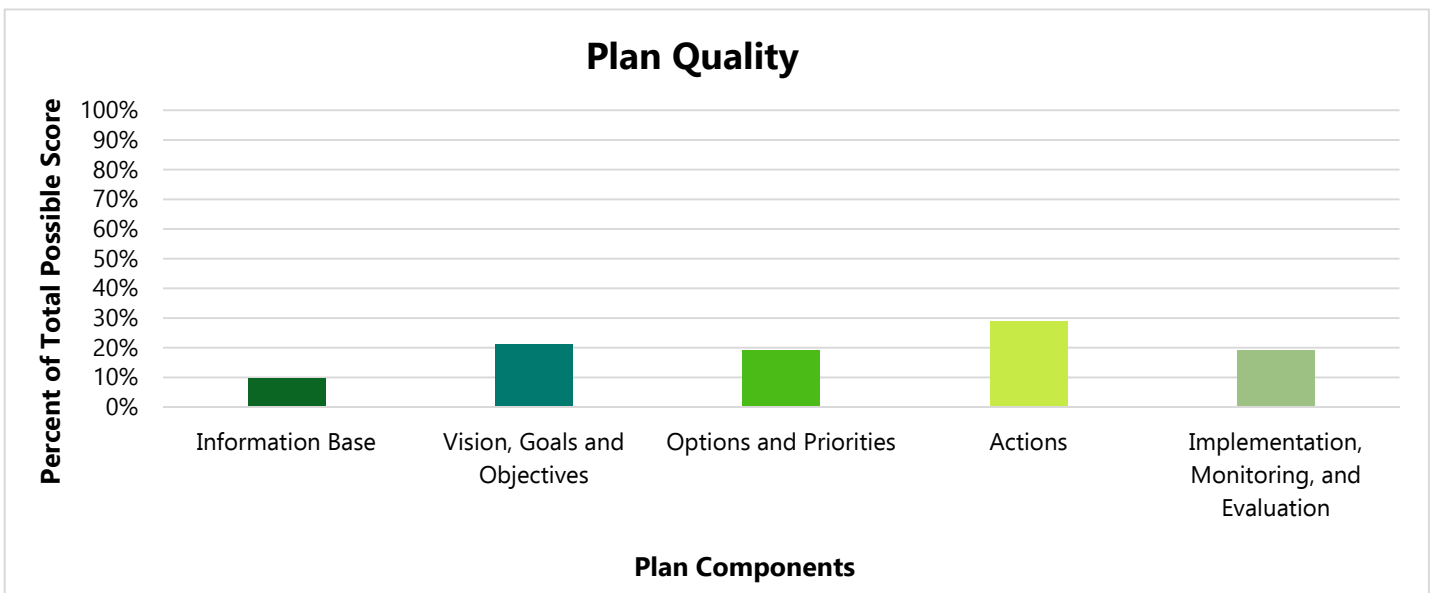


Figure 5. Plan quality for all outcome criteria evaluated.

Narrowing in on specific outcome criteria, procedural justice (C12) received the highest plan quality score. The outcome criteria which received the lowest scores were again biodiversity (C10) and air quality (C2), at 0%.

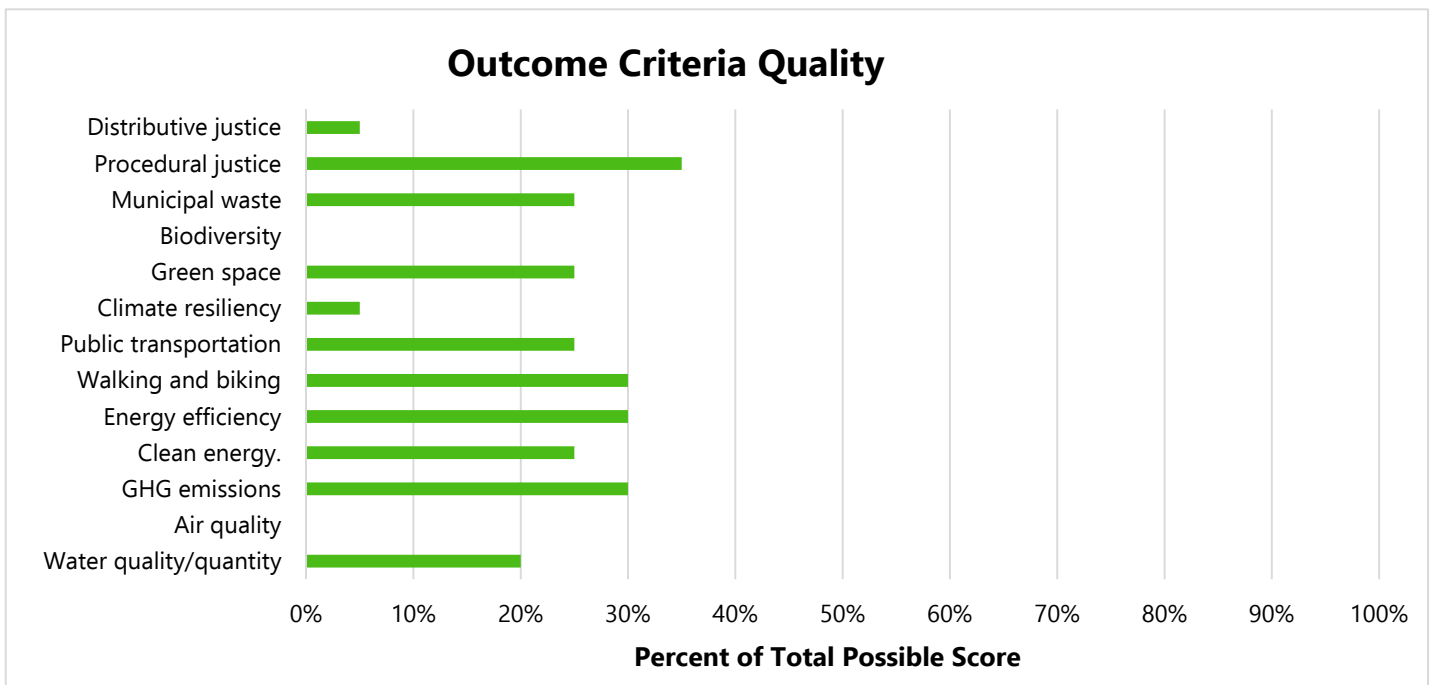


Figure 6. Aggregate plan quality scores for assessed outcome criteria.

## Takeaways

The Jackson Environmental Action Plan exhibits a commendable awareness of climate issues, demonstrating a strong commitment to addressing sustainability challenges. The plan marks a significant milestone in its commitment to addressing environmental challenges. In future iterations, the benefit of the plan could be built upon with the inclusion of more localized analysis, specified policy proposals, and a focus on implementation. By incorporating additional localized data, such as energy consumption patterns, waste management practices, and transportation trends into the

plan itself, the action plan could provide a more comprehensive and tailored approach to addressing the city's unique sustainability challenges.

## Appendix

Outcome Criteria	Evaluation Categories							
	Overall Progress			Plan Quality				
	Awareness	Analysis	Action	Information Base	Vision,	Options	Actions	Implementation
<b>C1</b>	1	0	1	0	1	1	1	1
<b>C2</b>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>C3</b>	2	0	1	2	1	1	1	1
<b>C4</b>	2	0	2	0	1	1	2	1
<b>C5</b>	2	0	2	1	1	1	2	1
<b>C6</b>	2	2	2	1	1	1	2	1
<b>C7</b>	2	2	1	1	1	1	1	1
<b>C8</b>	2	0	0	0	1	0	0	0
<b>C9</b>	2	0	2	0	1	1	2	1
<b>C10</b>	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>C11</b>	2	2	2	0	1	1	2	1
<b>C12</b>	2	0	2	0	1	2	2	2
<b>C13</b>	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0

Table 4. Full evaluation results.

## References

- Baker, Ingrid, Ann Peterson, Greg Brown, and Clive McAlpine. 2012. "Local Government Response to the Impacts of Climate Change: An Evaluation of Local Climate Adaptation Plans." *Landscape and Urban Planning* 107 (2): 127–36. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.landurbplan.2012.05.009>.
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