

# Charleston County

Climate Action Plan

**Draft**

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Climate Action Plan

**Draft**

February 2024



## Agenda

- The Process
- Engagement
- Model Results
- Implementation Strategy
- Recommendations and Next Steps

# SSG - Leading Climate Action Planners

**40+**

members

**20+**

years

**100+**

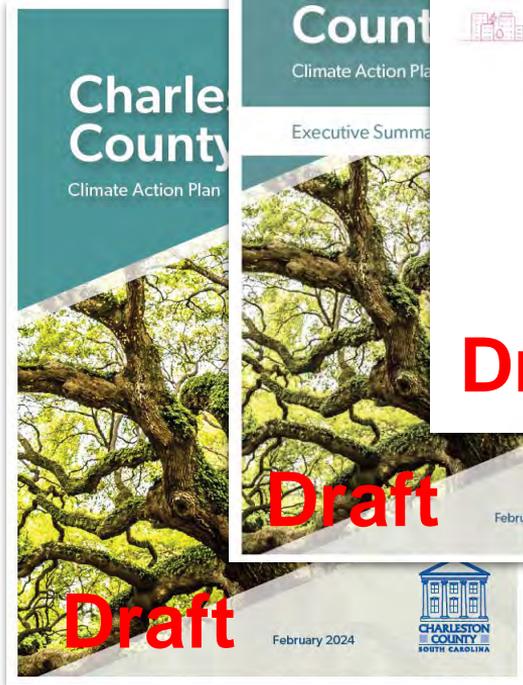
climate action projects



# What does a CAP do?

The Climate Action Plan:

- ✓ Demonstrates leadership in the challenge to reduce climate pollution (emissions)
- ✓ Outlines detailed actions to reduce our greenhouse gas emissions
- ✓ Identifies economic development opportunities
- ✓ Ensures an equitable transition for all community members



**Big Moves**  
of the Charleston County's CA

**Big Move** N° Ac

- 1 Affordable and Resilient Buildings
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5
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- 7
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- 15
- 16

## FAQs Charleston County Climate Action Plan

### About Climate Action Plans

**Q: What is a climate action plan?**  
A: A climate action plan is a roadmap for the community to reduce GHG emissions, increase energy efficiency, advance equity objectives and increase affordability for households and businesses. In addition to reducing GHG emissions, it is about making sure the County is ready for and can take advantage of future trends in the energy system.

**Q: Why did Charleston County create a climate action plan?**  
A: The development of the Climate Action Plan was a mandate from Council. The Climate Action Plan allows the County and its residents to leverage federal funding for a wide range of initiatives. The plan is Charleston County's contribution to addressing climate change. It describes actions to create new jobs and increase energy efficiency. It also looks at how the energy system is changing and will continue to change and how Charleston County can ensure these changes benefit community members.

**Q: What is Charleston County's role as a leader in the state on climate action?**  
A: The Climate Action Plan ensures that Charleston County is a leader in the state, and in the south, in undertaking climate action and advancing equity and economic development.

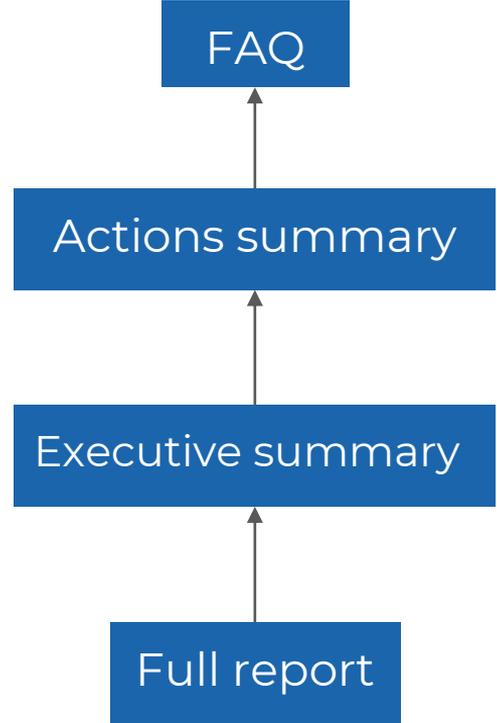
**Q: How are sustainability and resilience related?**  
A: Sustainability focuses on reducing greenhouse gas emissions to lessen the effects of climate change. Resilience is essentially the ability to adapt to a changing environment.

**Q: What is the risk of not having a Climate Action Plan?**  
A: There are many shifts in technologies and approaches to energy underway in the US and globally. A climate action plan ensures that Charleston County can anticipate these changes and leverage them for the County's benefit. It also sets up the County and community members for grants and incentives from the federal government.

### How was the CAP developed?

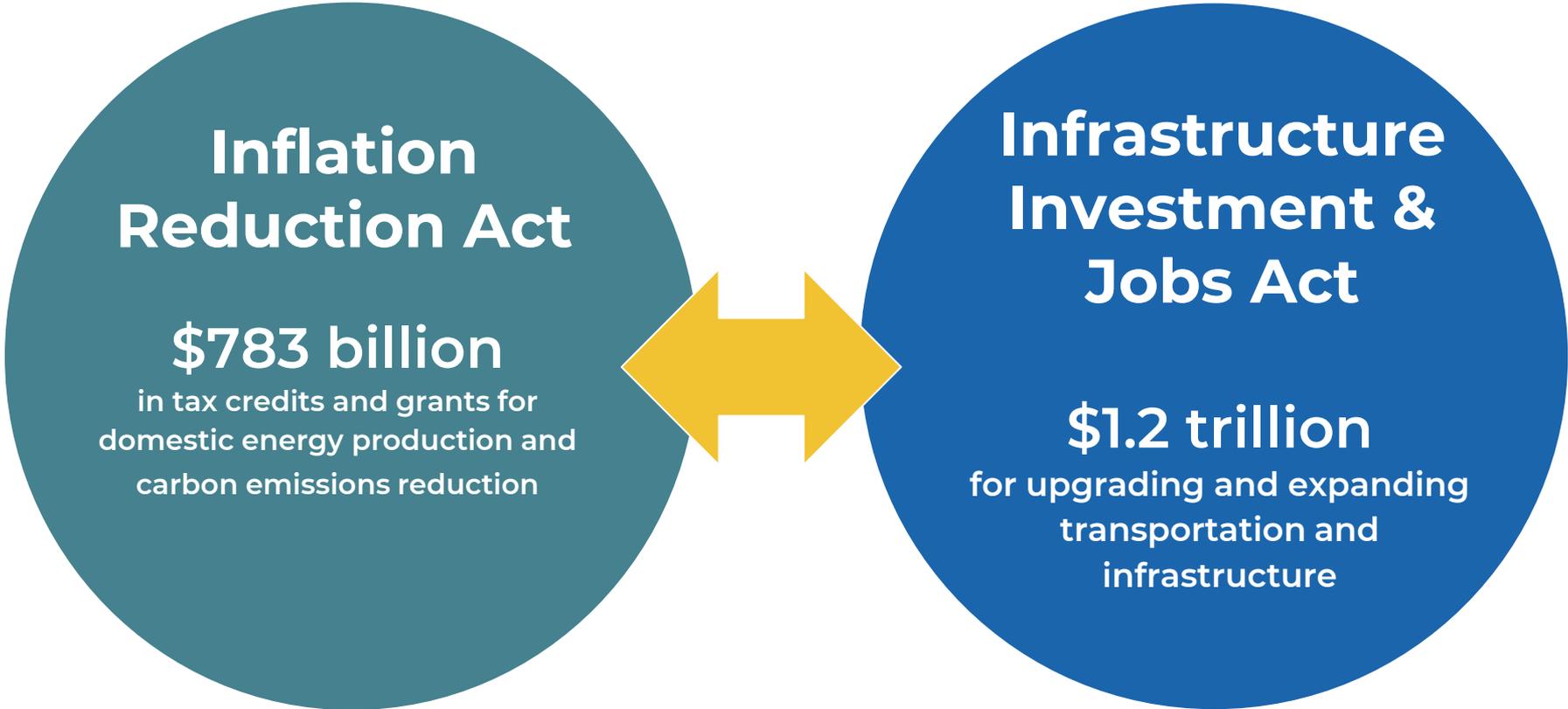
**Q: How was Charleston's Climate Action Plan developed?**  
A: The Climate Action Plan was developed by a consultant, guided by an external advisory committee (the RSAC) and an engagement process with the community. An internal committee of staff experts, sustainability experts, and representatives from other municipalities, the SECAF, also informed the development of the CAP. The consultant used a sophisticated computer model to evaluate the actions.

**Q: How was the RSAC created?**  
A: The RSAC was appointed by the County Council in September 2022. Its members include representatives from the Chamber of Commerce, Higher Education, the SC Dept. of the Home Builders Association, a resilience technical expert, a sustainability technical expert, an energy representative, a County Council member, and a County staff member.



A Unique Moment

# Federal Investments



# State Context

- ✓ the Priority Climate Action Plan
- ✓ review of the PACE program in the legislature
- ✓ Home Energy Score program
- ✓ emerging wind and EV manufacturing industries

# The Process

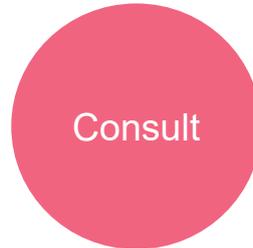
# The Engagement Process



# Engagement



- Regular Project Updates
- Council Presentation
- Public Town Hall and Webinars
- Newsletter articles



- **Community Outreach Activities**



- Pre-engagement Interviews
- Resilience and Sustainability Advisory Committee (RSAC) Meetings
- Staff + Expert Climate Advisory Team (SECAT) Meetings

# Engagement by the numbers

8

Pre-engagement  
interviews

7

Public Meetings

7

RSAC Meetings  
Resilience and Sustainability  
Advisory Committee

9

Outreach Events

7

SECAT Meetings  
Staff+Expert Climate  
Advisory Team

365

Online Questionnaire  
respondents

## RSAC Members

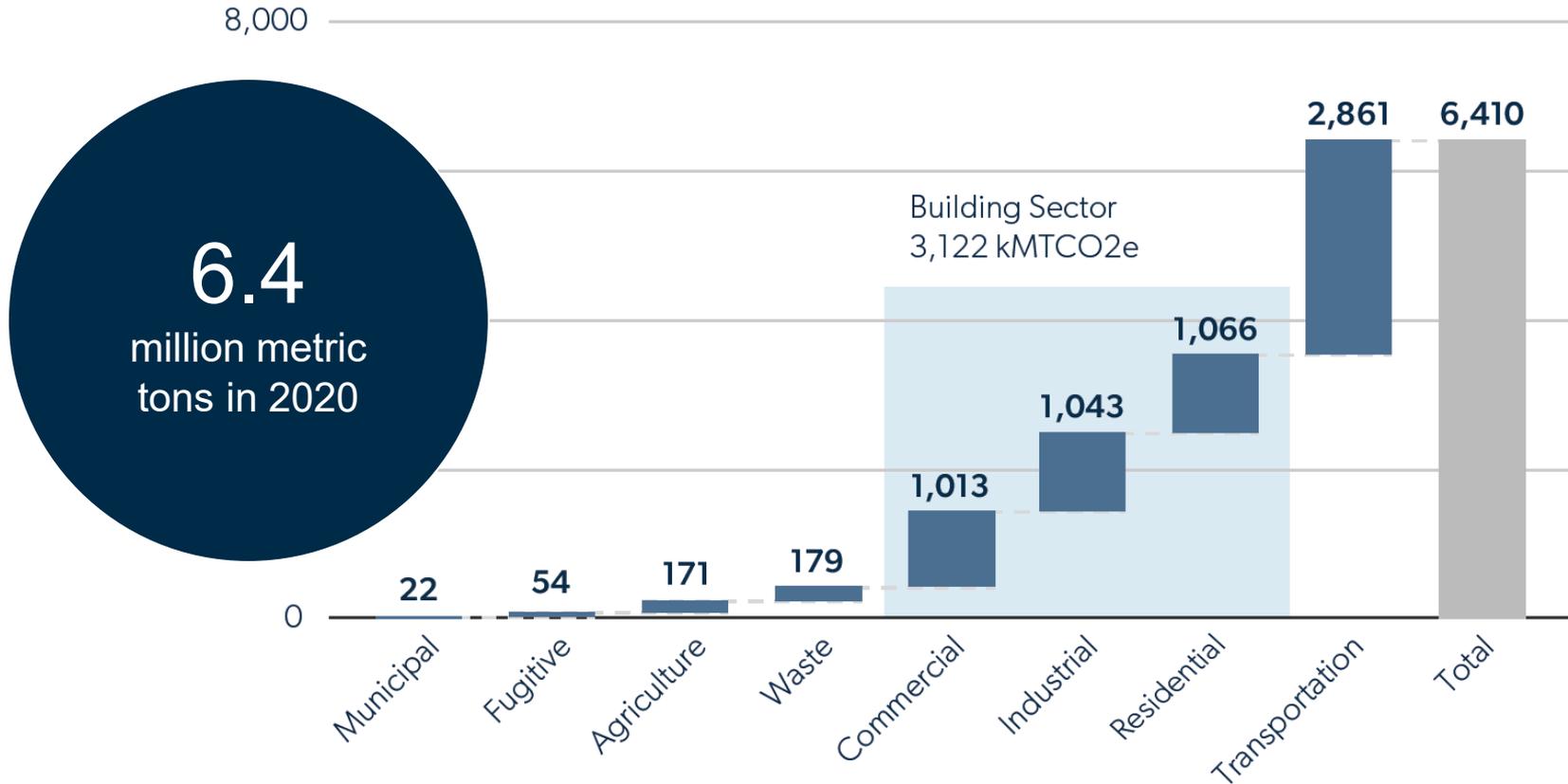
- Joe Boykin - Charleston County Council
- Sally Brooks - Charleston County Staff
- Diamond Curry - Chamber of Commerce
- Kyle James - BCDCOG
- Adrian Cain - Home Builders Association
- Scott Curtis - Resilience Technical Expert
- Scott Runyon - Energy Expert
- Stewart Weinberg - Sustainability Technical Expert

## SECAT Members

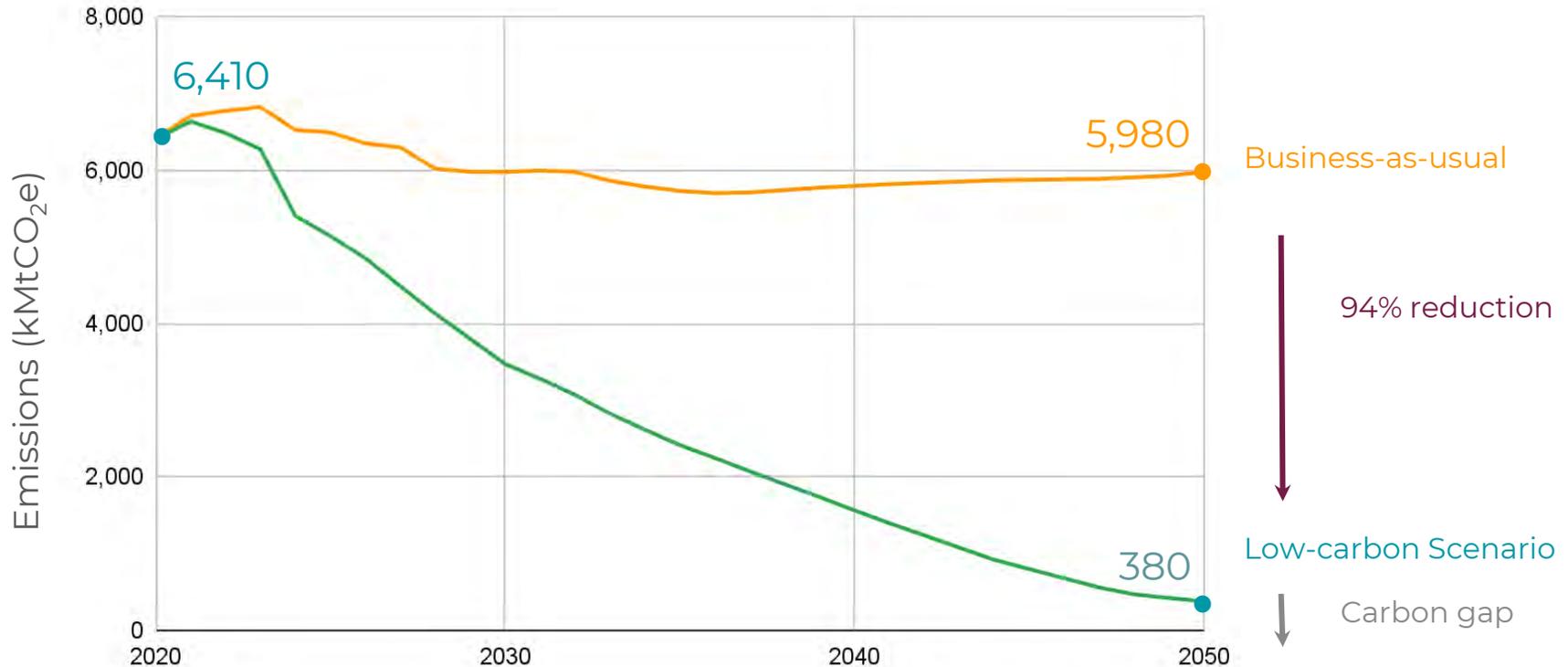
- Katie McKain - Director of Sustainability, City of Charleston
- Christine Von Kolnitz - Sustainability & Energy Manager, MUSC
- Kristin Miguez - Senior Planner, BCDCOG
- Belvin Olasov - Co-Director, Charleston Climate Coalition
- Rowan Emerson - Program Manager, Charleston Climate Coalition
- Flannery Wood - Planner II, Town of James Island
- Rowan Emerson - Program Manager, Charleston Climate Coalition
- Shannon Whitehead - Emergency Management & Resilience Officer, Town of Mt. Pleasant
- Adam MacConnell - Project Manager, City of North Charleston
- Cris Taylor - Charleston County Fleet
- Sally Brooks - Charleston County Zoning & Planning
- Kip Watson - Charleston County Economic Development
- Michael Kennedy/Glenn Hill - Charleston County Facilities
- Melissa Gilroy - Charleston County Finance

# The Challenge

# The Starting Point

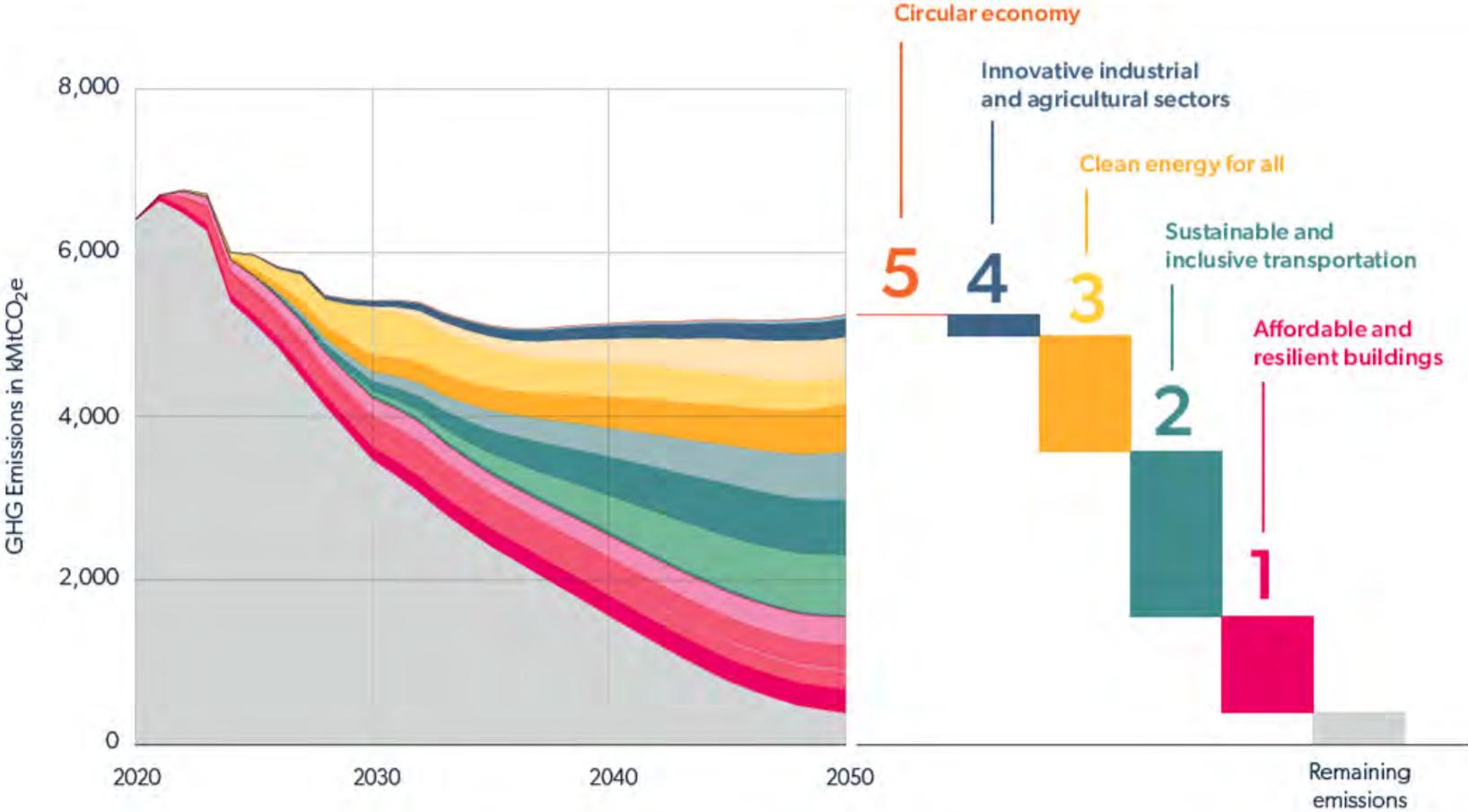


# The Pathway



# The Opportunities

# The Opportunities



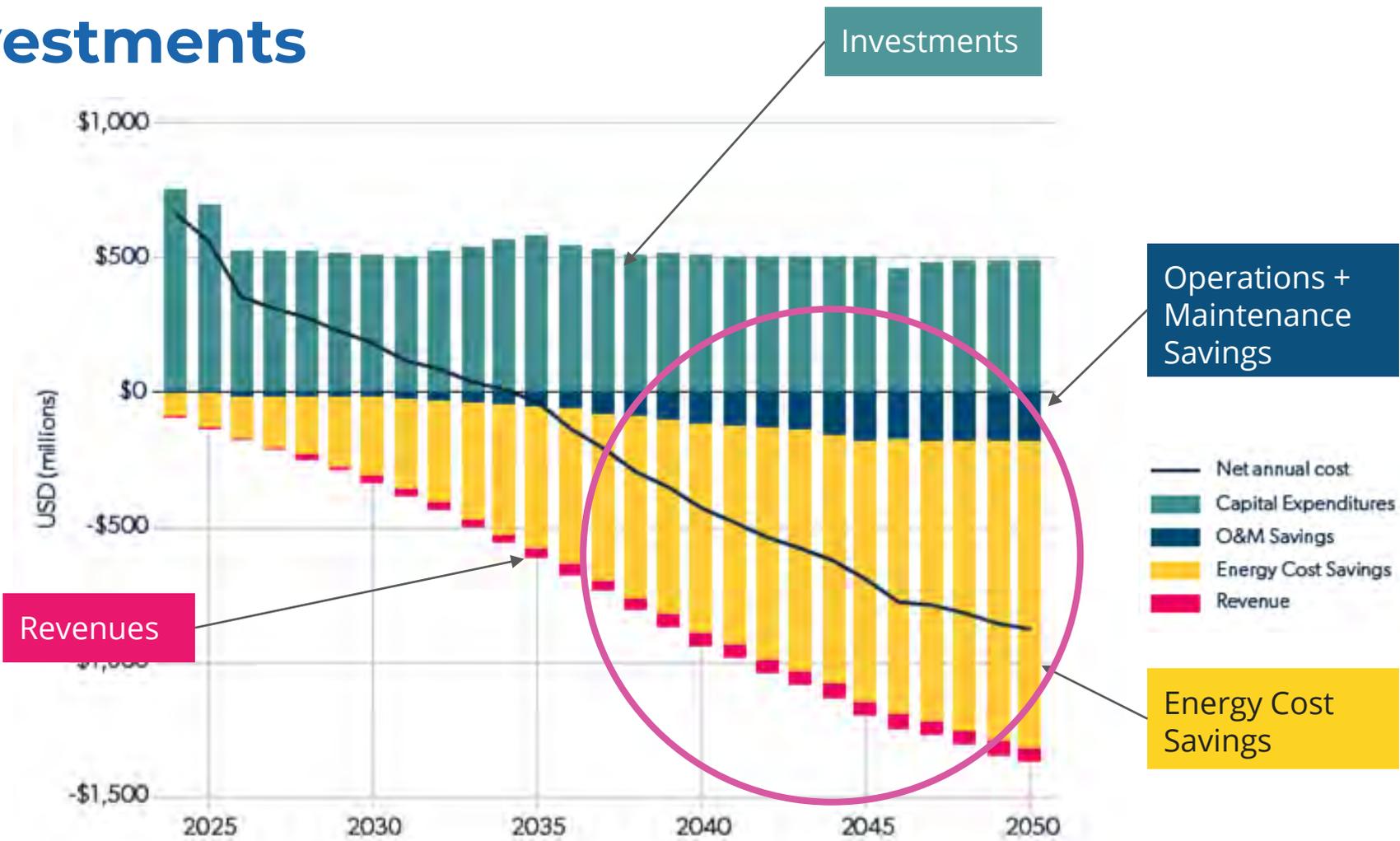
# The Impact

In 2023, households and businesses spent

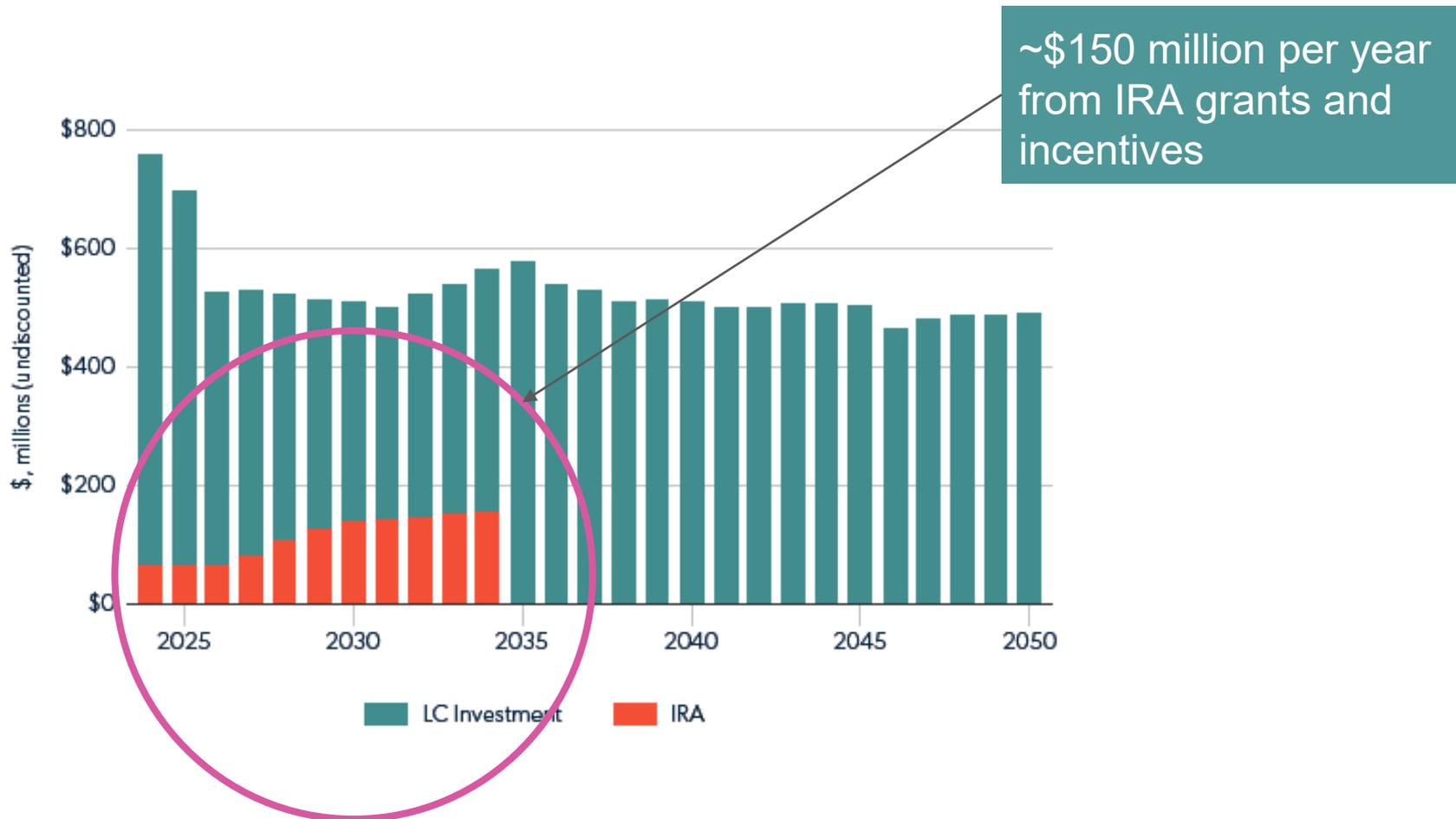
**\$1.7 billion**

on energy

# Investments



# The IRA Opportunity



Household expenditures on energy decline

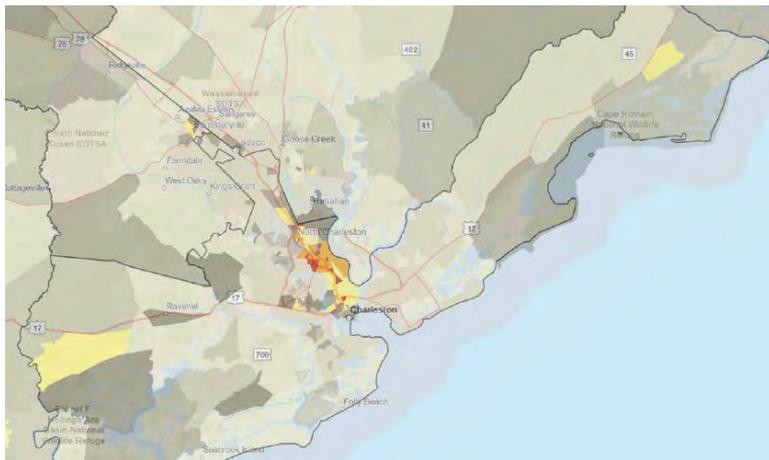
from **\$5,200** in 2020

to **\$3,900** by 2050

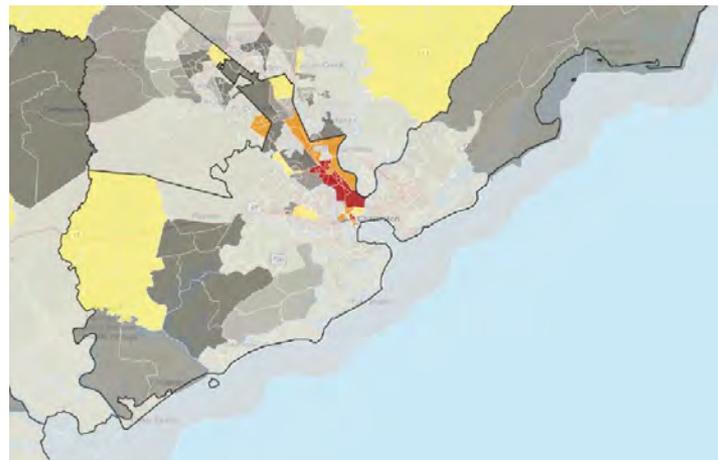
3,400

jobs per year

Equity-centered



Lead paint



Asthma

Reduces energy consumption, which will **reduce household energy costs** and therefore the energy burden.

Improves **indoor air quality and comfort** for homes that are not insulated.

Increases **travel options** for low income families on transit and active transportation

Reduces **exposure to air pollution** from combusting gasoline and diesel in vehicles and natural gas in buildings.

Stimulates **new job and business opportunities** across the county.

# Implementation Strategy

# The Actions



5

Big Moves

11

Strategies

53

Recommended Actions

# Big Moves

of the Charleston County's CAP



1



Affordable and resilient buildings



- Construct new buildings to net-zero standards
- Deep retrofit existing buildings

2



Sustainable and inclusive transportation



- Create complete communities
- Expand transit and active infrastructures
- Switch to zero-or-low emission vehicles

3



Clean energy for all



- Advocate for grid decarbonization
- Increase local, renewable energy generation capacity

4



Innovative industrial and agricultural sectors



- Improve industrial sector processes
- Improve and electrify agricultural sector processes

5



Circular economy



- Reduce waste generation
- Increase waste diversion from landfill

# Tentative Project Timeline



**JUNE - DECEMBER 2023:** Community Outreach to write CAP - collected resident feedback about what residents think is important to be included in the CAP.

**MARCH-APRIL 2024:** Community Outreach after CAP draft is complete - in-person or virtual information sessions on CAP are available to community groups.

# THANK YOU

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SSG