

GREAT LAKES CLIMATE ADAPTATION NETWORK (GLCAN)

WORK PLAN 2024-2026

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ABOUT THE NETWORK

The Great Lakes Climate Adaptation Network (GLCAN) is a regional network of local government staff and partners that actively work together to identify and act on the unique climate adaptation challenges of the Great Lakes region.

The purpose of the network is to build capacity for community resiliency efforts by focusing on sharing information on and finding solutions to the unique challenges faced by the Great Lakes region. Building upon a core network of member cities and counties, GLCAN explores partnerships with other organizations that are working on Great Lakes climate challenges. GLCAN also seeks to promote connections among cities, counties, nonprofits, foundations, and universities. Formed in 2015 as a partner network of the Urban Sustainability Directors Network (USDN), GLCAN is a member-driven peer network that integrates leading cities and counties across the Great Lakes region to address issues of community sustainability. GLCAN seeks to establish network connections and identify network priorities through quarterly conference calls and yearly face-to-face meetings. GLCAN members share resources and updates through a variety of online tools and techniques.

[GLISA](#), the Great Lakes CAP/RISA team, continues to provide administrative support to the network, including but not limited to conference call capabilities, note-taking & distribution, and applying for collaborative project funding.

MISSION

GLCAN is a USDN Partner Network of local government staff and partners that will work together through peer learning to identify and act on the unique climate adaptation challenges of the Great Lakes region. GLCAN aims to:

- Share strategies for using an equity lens in local government climate adaptation planning and implementation
- Improve the accessibility and integration of climate information into decision-making processes

- Strengthen relationships among municipalities and key institutional, non-profit, and business community partners in developing climate-resilient programs and strategies
- Increase the capacity of adaptation professionals working in the Great Lakes region
- Increase the capacity of regional adaptation planning
- Collaborate on initiatives that enhance the resilience of the Great Lakes region to climate-related impacts

Why We Exist: The purpose of this network is to build capacity for community resiliency efforts by focusing on sharing information on and finding solutions to the unique challenges faced by the Great Lakes region.

What We Do: Building upon a core network of member cities and counties, GLCAN explores partnerships with other organizations that are working on Great Lakes climate challenges. GLCAN also seeks to promote connections among cities, counties, nonprofits, foundations, and universities.

How We Work Together: GLCAN seeks to establish network connections and identify network priorities through bi-monthly conference calls and yearly face-to-face meetings. GLCAN members share resources and updates through a variety of online methods.

GOVERNANCE MODEL

GLCAN is a member-driven peer network. Network membership is limited to local government staff and partners. Each year the network will identify two co-chairs to assist in facilitating bimonthly network calls. As the network grows, the network may create a Steering Committee to assist with governance.

All members are encouraged to maintain active participation in the network. This includes participating in regular network calls, attending the annual virtual or face-to-face meetings, and sharing information with members. There are no membership dues and the network is free to join.

CORE FUNCTIONS OF GLCAN

- **Strengthen network communications** that enable peer learning and resource sharing.
 - Hold bi-monthly conference calls
 - Maintain two sustainability leaders to lead the network
 - Hold annual meeting
 - Organize virtual or face-to-face peer exchanges based on member priorities
 - Host guest presentations and municipal member panels on topics of interest and expertise
 - Host smaller “design charrettes” for members to workshop project ideas
 - Make information and resources accessible to members through the email listserv and the GLISA City Resources website
- Ensure GLCAN members have **access to the best available climate information** to support decision-making.
 - Connect members regularly to existing GLISA climate information (e.g., climatologies) through the GLISA site

- Support use of existing tools from USDN and others (e.g., Game of Floods, Vulnerability Assessment Template, Neighborhoods at Risk, Equity Toolkit and Trainings)
- Explore strategies to expand climate adaptation knowledge and expertise to other municipality staff beyond core sustainability staff
- Support GLCAN members in **integrating racial equity into all projects**, communicating about race and disparate impacts in climate conversations and, centering equity in planning and implementation.
 - Use Equity Foundations trainings provided by USDN
 - Connect with USDN equity consultants to support GLCAN member priorities
 - Be intentional so that race and disparate impacts are central in GLCAN climate planning and conversations
 - Support GLCAN members in developing adaptation projects with an intentional focus on first serving people and communities who are both highly exposed to climate risks because of the places they live and have fewer resources, capacity, safety nets, or political power.
- **Survey GLCAN members** to develop and maintain qualitative and quantitative inventory of Great Lakes adaptation and sustainability work across the network with a clear focus on equity and public health
 - Use the GLISA website to share climate adaptation success stories
 - “Map” partners with common achievements and common opportunities
- Identify and pursue **collaborative grant opportunities** to provide network operating support and to fund member-driven collaborative projects.
 - Identify GLCAN member priority areas for funding
 - Work with regional funders to share GLCAN member priorities

GLCAN also strives to follow [USDN’s High Impact Practices](#)

GOALS, TARGETS, AND ACTIONS

The following goals were determined at the February 2024 GLCAN network meeting.

Work Plan Goals 2024-2026
<p>Goal 1: Climate education resources <i>Develop regional climate educational resources that can be used across GLCAN communities (videos, slide decks, webinars, fact sheets). Communicate the science and basic ways of understanding climate change and how it affects the Great Lakes region and populations.</i></p>
<p>Target: Develop at least one educational resource designed to be used across GLCAN communities</p>
<p>Actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Decide on 1-3 educational resources of most importance to GLCAN members<input type="checkbox"/> Develop a “sandbox” website (e.g., google drive, USDN) for GLCAN members to share educational resources they have developed that may be scalable to other communities with minor changes<input type="checkbox"/> Develop 1 new GLCAN educational resource and/or find funding for outside consultants to develop educational resources
<p>Goal 2: Scaling regional resilience collaboration <i>Support regional collaboration by creating regional resilience authorities with stable funding and staff. These regional resilience authorities would allow communities to partner and share resources and scale resilience planning and project implementation across a broader region. The goal of these authorities is to provide under-resourced communities with access to staff capacity and funding opportunities.</i></p>
<p>Target: Support 1 regional collaboration by 2025</p>
<p>Actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Identify funding to support regional collaboration technical assistance<input type="checkbox"/> Provide technical assistance to one regional partnership: assist a GLCAN member community in scaling climate planning across multiple jurisdictions to share costs and resources<input type="checkbox"/> Explore opportunities to fund support for a more formal regional resilience authority
<p>Goal 3: Peer community support/assistance <i>Increase peer learning opportunities for members through GLCAN peer advisory calls to prepare for new projects. Members initiating new projects will benefit from advice and counsel from peer community sustainability staff to help provide insight into successful strategies and avoid pitfalls. Calls are anticipated to be 1 hour with a short introduction and problem statement shared with peer advisors prior to the call.</i></p>
<p>Target: Support 1-2 GLCAN Peer Advisor calls</p>
<p>Actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Poll newer members about upcoming planning projects where peer advisors would be useful<input type="checkbox"/> Invite peer advisors to support the member project<input type="checkbox"/> Build a calendar of upcoming projects

IMPACT

2015-2024:

- GLCAN was established in 2015
- **First face-to-face GLCAN meeting - October 2015**
 - 11 communities attended and focused on honing the scope for the network.
 - Interest from partner organizations including Great Lakes Commission, University of Michigan Graham Sustainability Institute, National Wildlife Federation
 - Partnered with UM Climate Center to host and fund event
- **Climate Fact Sheets** - Produced climate fact sheets for a number of member communities
- **Urban Sustainability Directors Network Regional Network Pilot** - Participated in the pilot program participant; currently a USDN Partner Network.
- **2016 Annual Meeting - October 2016 at the Great Lakes Adaptation Forum (GLAF)**
- **2017 Annual Meeting - May 2017 at the National Adaptation Forum (NAF)**
- **Vulnerability Assessment Pilot - Five Cities** - Secured funding through the 2017 USDN Innovation Fund to support five GLCAN member cities' work with the Huron River Watershed Council to develop a vulnerability assessment template common to Great Lake cities. Participants included Ann Arbor, Dearborn, Cleveland, Evanston, and Indianapolis. Partners included Headwaters Economics and GLISA. Template was used in 2018 planning efforts by Cleveland, Evanston, and Indianapolis.
- **Scaling Up Vulnerability Assessment Project - 12 Cities** - GLISA secured NOAA funding to provide vulnerability assessment templates and training to 12 GLCAN cities based on the pilot USDN project.
 - Panel presentation about the project at the 2018 Great Lakes Adaptation Forum (GLAF).
 - Overall, 17 vulnerability assessments were developed for cities with customized climate and socioeconomic information and a focus on stormwater adaptation.
 - GLISA is in the process of scaling up to serve more local governments around the nation.
- **Neighborhoods at Risk** - Headwaters Economics linked its national set of curated socioeconomic data with a growing set of climate vulnerability data to create a mapping tool for neighborhoods at risk as part of a 2018 USDN Innovation Fund grant. Neighborhoods at Risk is now available for all areas of the country.
- **2018 Annual Meeting - September 24, 2018, at the Great Lakes Adaptation Forum (GLAF) in Ann Arbor, MI.**
- **2019 Annual Meeting - April 23, 2019, at the National Adaptation Forum (NAF) in Madison, WI.**
- **COVID-19 Response** - At the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, GLCAN decided to meet every two weeks in the spring to work together to respond to the common challenges they are facing during the pandemic, including resilient recovery plans, ideas for shovel-ready projects, and a brief on the value of sustainability and adaptation planning as it relates to pandemic recovery.
- **Network information flier** - updated GLCAN [2-page flier](#)
- **Electrification convening** - Ann Arbor hosted a GLCAN city electrification convening with the support of a \$5,000 USDN grant.
- **2021 GLCAN Annual Meeting - February 2, 2021 (virtual)**. 19 members attended the 2021 annual meeting via Zoom, where the network prioritized strategies for the 2021-2023 work plan,

discussed opportunities for pursuing funding and collaboration and provided input on ways to increase network engagement.

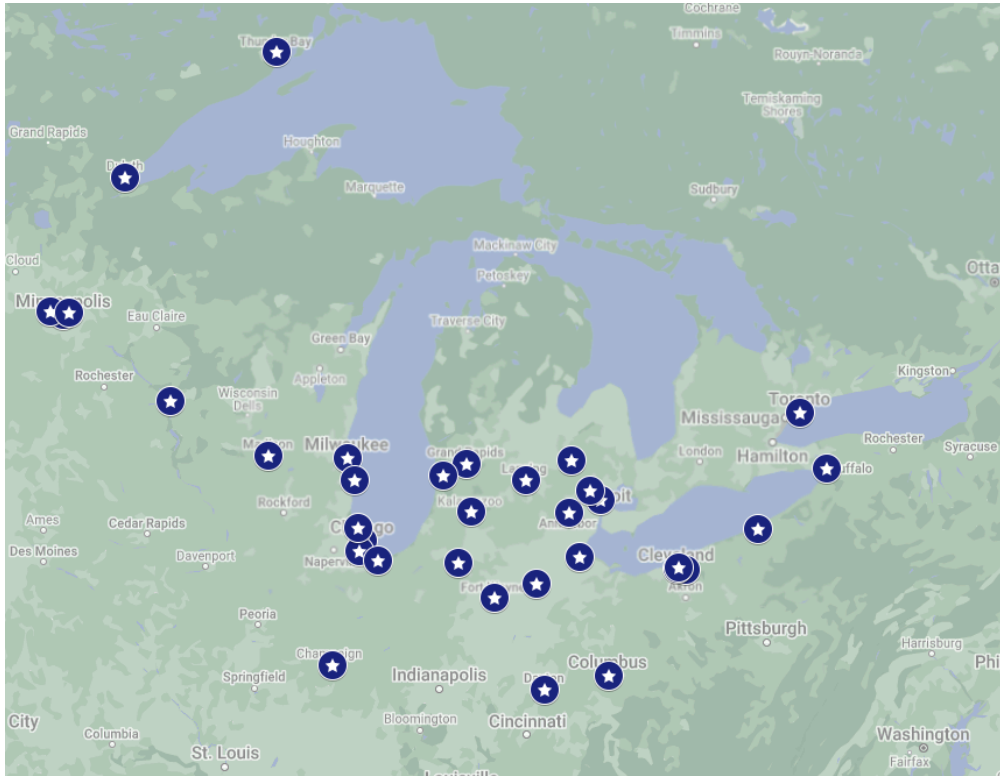
- **Inventory of climate adaptation and sustainability efforts** - Created an inventory of city/county/local gov. climate adaptation and sustainability work in the region, based on a survey filled out by members. The inventory helps to identify opportunities for peer learning and collaboration in the network.
- **Sustainable purchasing cohort** - The Ecology Center has supported a small cohort of 8-15 GLCAN members who have met bimonthly since November 2021. Rebecca Meuninck of the Ecology Center hosted an introductory webinar on green purchasing policies in September 2021.
- **GLCAN Co-chairs** - Four GLCAN members served as rotating network co-chairs since establishing the role after the 2021 annual meeting. Co-chairs included:
 - Joel Howrani-Heeres, Detroit, MI (2021-2022)
 - Erin Quetell, Oakland County, MI (2021-2023)
 - Mike Foley, Cuyahoga County, OH (2022 - 2024)
 - Beatrice Miringu, Toledo, OH (2023-2024)
- **Climate Hazard and Mitigation Planning (CHaMP) tool** - Members provided input/feedback on the CHaMP tool to improve its usability and usefulness, before the tool's public launch.
- **Climate Hazards fact sheet** - updated a [climate hazards fact sheet](#) for the Great Lakes basin that communicates regional climate threats and how climate change might amplify hazards and risk in the future.
- **Greening American Cities** - Began GLCAN support for the Greening American Cities project in Chicago, IL, supported by Bezos Earth Fund.
- **City sustainability timelines** - created a template for progress timelines on sustainability efforts within communities.
- **Seeking network funding** - Submitted a letter of intent to NOAA's Climate Resilience Regional Challenge to support regional resilience planning in select GLCAN member communities.
- **Member interviews** - Began interviews with new members to help curate GLISA resources.
- **Regional and national meetings** - Supported Midwest Climate Resilience Conference and USDN annual meeting in October 2023. Numerous GLCAN members attended both meetings as panelists, presenters, or facilitators.
- **Repository of shared network materials** - created a Google Drive folder containing all past meeting notes, guest speaker recordings, Jamboards, and the network membership email list.
- **Network calls** - Dedicated numerous bi-monthly network calls from 2021-2023 to topics and guest speakers requested by members including:
 - Potential uses for federal funds coming to the Great Lakes region (guest speaker Laura Rubin, Director of Healing our Water Great Lakes Coalition)
 - Climate-driven migration to the Great Lakes region (guest speakers Rachel Jacobson, American Society of Adaptation Professionals; Matt Hauer, Florida State University Center for Demography and Population Health; Missy Stults, City of Ann Arbor; Hillarie Sorensen, 1954 Treaty Organization)
 - Leveraging federal stimulus and American Rescue plan funds towards building greater resilience (peer-to-peer sharing amongst members)
 - Resilience hubs (guest speaker Kristin Baja, USDN)
 - Circular Economy (peer-to-peer sharing from GLCAN members Jason Wood, Cleveland, and Mindy Granley, Duluth)
 - Capital improvement planning (guest speaker Deb Gosselin, City of Ann Arbor)
 - Electric vehicle infrastructure (guest speakers Charles Griffith, Ecology Center; Rebecca Heisel, Great Plains Institute; and Jessica Hyink, Great Plains Institute)

- Federal funding opportunities from the Department of Energy (Rose Dady, Regional Intergovernmental and External Affairs Specialist for the Midwest with the Department of Energy)
- Overview of GLISA tools and resources (from Kim Channell, GLISA Climatologist and GLCAN co-coordinator)
- Climate Pollution Reduction Grants (peer to peer sharing amongst members)
- Regional climate collaboratives, climate ready workforce, climate corps (from GLCAN member Beth Gibbons, Farallon Strategies)
- **2024 GLCAN Annual Meeting - February 6, 2024 (virtual)**. 26 members attended the 2024 annual meeting via Zoom, where the network prioritized strategies for the 2024-2026 work plan, discussed opportunities for pursuing funding and collaboration, and provided input on new network goals for the next 3 years.

APPENDIX

MEMBER COMMUNITIES AND ORGANIZATIONS

Participating Local Governments and Partner Organizations:



Cities/towns:

- Ann Arbor, MI
- Buffalo, NY
- Chicago, IL
- Cleveland, OH
- Columbus, OH
- Dayton, OH
- Defiance, OH
- Duluth, MN
- Erie, PA
- Ferndale, MI
- Flint, MI
- Fort Wayne, IN
- Gary, IN
- Goshen, IN
- Grand Rapids, MI
- Holland, MI
- Kalamazoo, MI
- La Crosse, WI
- Lansing, MI
- Madison, WI
- Milwaukee, WI
- Minneapolis, MN
- Racine, WI
- Roseville, MN
- Royal Oak, MI
- Shaker Heights, OH
- Thunder Bay, ON
- Toledo, OH
- Toronto, ON
- Urbana, IL
- Wilmette, IL

Counties:

- Cook County, IL
- Cuyahoga County, OH
- Hennepin County, MN
- Oakland County, MI

Local/State Government Affiliated:

- Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago
- Michigan Department of Environment Great Lakes and Energy
- Minnesota DNR Coastal Program
- Minnesota DOT
- Northeast Ohio Regional Sewer District

Other organizations with GLCAN members (NGOs, research institutions, consultants, etc.):

- Bezos Earth Fund
- Chagrin River Watershed Partners, Inc.
- Cooperative Institute for Great Lakes Research
- Ducks Unlimited
- Farallon Strategies
- FLOW (For Love of Water)
- Freshwater Future
- GLISA (NOAA's Great Lakes CAP/RISA team)

- Great Plains Institute
- Headwaters Economics
- Healing our Waters- Great Lakes Coalition
- Huron River Watershed Council
- Illinois Department of Natural Resources
- Idaho National Laboratory
- MN Department of Health
- National Wildlife Federation
- Natural Resources Defense Council
- New York SeaGrant
- New York State Water Resources Institute
- Northeast Climate Adaptation Science Center
- Oakland University
- Ohio State University
- Second Nature
- Smart Columbus
- Southeast Michigan Council of Governments
- University of Buffalo
- University of Michigan
- University of Minnesota Sea Grant Program
- Urban Sustainability Directors Network