The Climate Mayors Economy:

How U.S. cities are reducing fossil fuel consumption while growing their economies — and what continued progress means for how communities thrive.

September 2026

CLIMATE MAYORS

A Different Kind of Economic Story

Americans are feeling the impacts of the cost-of-living and climate crises like never before. Energy affordability is reshaping how families experience the broader economy day to day, with rising utility bills and transportation costs among the fastest drivers of inflation. By implementing proven solutions—from efficiency upgrades and clean energy incentives to building more affordable and connected housing and EV infrastructure—Climate Mayors are lowering energy costs and building healthier, more resilient cities.

Representing cities where over 70 million people live, work and raise families, Climate Mayors are proving that climate action strengthens economies. This report defines the Climate Mayors Economy as the collective GDP and fuel consumption of member cities and shows that ***the Climate Mayors Economy is strong and its progress is measurable***. It has an estimated annual GDP of $8.9 trillion and makes up 30% of the national economy, making this group of cities the third-largest economy in the world behind the U.S. and China.[1] For all that economic weight, the Climate Mayors Economy uses only 16% – about one-sixth – of the nation's fossil fuel use.[2]

This is a story about growth. Between 2019 and 2024, the Climate Mayors Economy grew: population increased 1.2%, and GDP increased 11.3%. At the same time, fossil fuel consumption per person fell 3.5%[3]—meaning more economic activity through pandemic recovery without returning to pre-pandemic fuel consumption levels. Member cities concentrate more jobs per resident than the nation as a whole, as many people commute in from surrounding areas. **When households spend less on gasoline, diesel and heating fuel, those dollars are available for other essential things families need**.

In partnership with Greenline Insights, this first-of-its-kind study analyzes that growth by measuring the Climate Mayors Economy's fossil fuel savings compared to the rest of the U.S., how those savings have grown over time, and how continued action could compound savings into the future. **The result: Climate Mayors cities are using less fossil fuel per capita, spending less as a result, and growing their economies.**

The Climate Mayors Economy

30% of U.S. GDP (an estimated 8.9 trillion)

21% of the U.S. population (71.2 million residents)

25% of jobs and income (55.7m jobs, $6.4T income)

16% of U.S. fossil fuel use (just 14.5% of motor fuel)

With more than 350 member mayors across 47 states, Climate Mayors members constitute a large and integral part of the U.S. population, economy, and energy system, making the Climate Mayors Economy a framework for showcasing how mayors are delivering meaningful economic impact for families. Continuing this trajectory is an opportunity to build more resilient economies while putting more money back into households over the next decade. This report includes inspiring examples of bold mayors who are seizing every opportunity and leading with innovation to build momentum to decarbonize our cities and grow their economies.

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[1] Results are in real 2026 dollars. Household count and GDP are estimates, sourced from IMPLAN data. Fuel consumption is sourced from Crosswalk Labs.
[2] This study covers direct fossil fuel combustion, including natural gas and petroleum burned in homes, buildings, and vehicles. The electricity sector is outside the scope of this analysis.
[3] Fuel use per person fell nationally over this period as well. These figures measure member cities against their own 2019 rates, not against national performance.

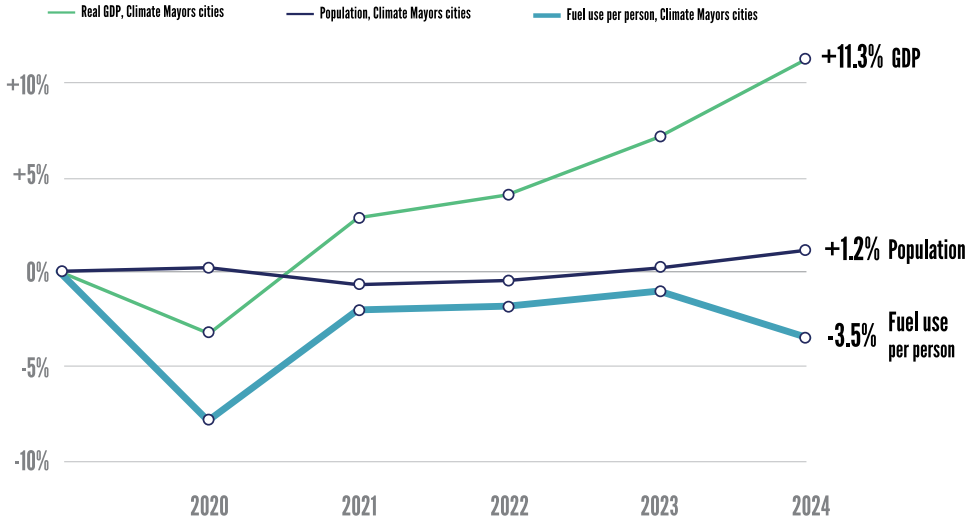
Key Finding
1

Spending less on fossil fuels did not stifle GDP growth:

Climate Mayors' economies grew their GDP by 11% since 2019, even as cities averaged $5.4 billion less in fossil fuel spending.

Climate Mayors cities didn't just recover from the pandemic—they reinvented themselves. The years from 2019 to 2024 forced every community to confront fragility in housing, infrastructure, public health, and local economies. But they also revealed something more powerful: cities' ability to adapt, innovate, and grow in ways that better serve people. As daily life recalibrated, many Climate Mayors cities emerged from the crisis with stronger economic footing, renewed population stability, and a clearer commitment to reducing fossil-fuel use. This study estimates that this translated into **$27.2 billion less fossil-fuel spending** over the five-year period than if 2019 consumption patterns had persisted.

The Climate Mayors Economy is decoupling economic growth and fuel consumption.



Climate Mayors Are Decoupling Growth From Fossil Fuels

Mayor Kate Gallego, Phoenix, AZ, is investing in connectivity by delivering 11.9 new miles of light rail with 15 stations, a new central transit hub to connect multiple lines, the Sky Harbor Sky Train replacing 78 CNG buses, 327 miles of new bike lanes, and the city's Active Transportation Program — are not only transforming mobility but fueling economic growth across the region. These projects expand access to jobs, attract private investment, and support high-density, mixed-use development that strengthens the city's tax base. By improving connectivity, reducing travel times, and creating safer, more reliable options for residents, Phoenix is building the kind of modern transportation network that businesses seek when deciding where to grow. Together, these investments demonstrate how climate-aligned transportation infrastructure can drive long-term economic development, support local employers, and create vibrant, connected neighborhoods.

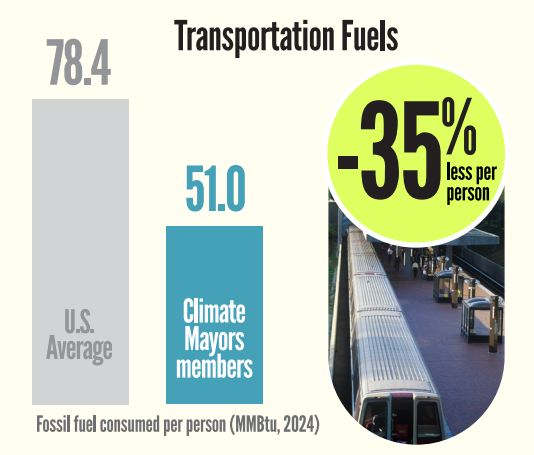
Mayor Justin M. Bibb, Cleveland, OH, is working with The Built Environment Collaborative connecting Cleveland residents to construction, infrastructure, and climate-related careers through grant funding and collective impact partnerships to organizations who train jobseekers and build Minority Business Enterprise capacity. The city is removing financial and material barriers to success through the Barrier Removal Fund helping with resources like car repairs, rental assistance, childcare, and appropriate gear and tools for the work. To date, we have trained over 2,600 people, supported 194 MBEs, and distributed over $700,000 in financial and material assistance.

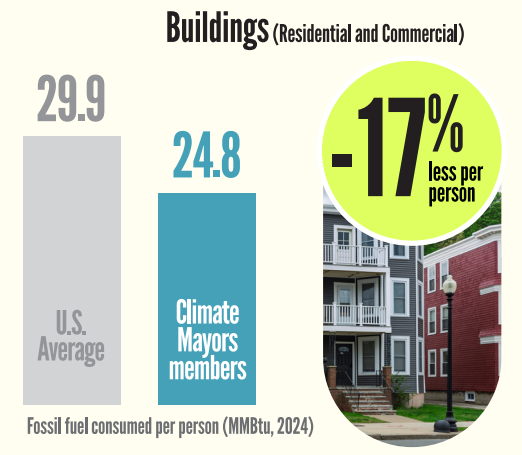
Key Finding
2

Lower fuel use translates into household savings:

In 2024, households in Climate Mayors cities saved nearly $1,000 each on fossil fuel costs compared to the rest of the U.S.

The Climate Mayors Economy is where one in five Americans live, work, and move through their daily routines. These cities are working to reshape how communities grow—building more connected neighborhoods, expanding transit options, shortening commutes, and accelerating the shift to cleaner, more efficient vehicles, homes and buildings. As a result, they use **30% less fossil fuel per person** than the rest of the country.[4] The savings also line up with the policy record: between 2020-2025 Climate Mayors members' had their largest wave of sector-specific climate policy implementation on record compared to other periods.[5] While this analysis does not establish that individual policies caused the differences in fuel consumption, it shows that lower fossil fuel use is occurring in cities that have also been actively building and implementing a broad portfolio of climate policies.



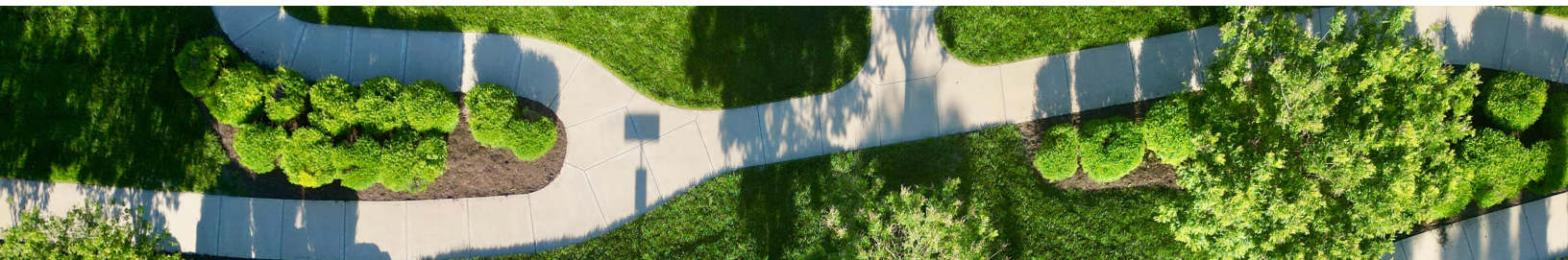


That difference shows up most clearly in transportation. Member cities use **35% fewer gallons of gasoline and diesel**, avoiding roughly **226 gallons per person every year**. For residents, that means cleaner air, fewer health risks, less money spent on gasoline and neighborhoods that feel more livable and less burdened by traffic and pollution.

The story doesn't end with environmental gains. By avoiding this use of fuels, the Climate Mayors Economy saved $57 billion in 2024 alone. Of that amount, approximately $28 billion reaches the household budget, adding up to **nearly $1,000 per Climate Mayors household in 2024**. When families spend less on gasoline, diesel, and heating fuel, they keep more of their own money—money that can go toward groceries, rent, childcare, or simply a little more breathing room in a tight monthly budget. In a moment when household stability matters more than ever, the choices these cities have made are reflected in the improved quality of life for millions.

[4] This comparison does not attribute the difference to Climate Mayors membership or to any policy.

[5] Thomas Consulting Group City Climate Policy Database.



A SNAPSHOT—The Climate Mayors Economy: Less fuel = more purchasing power

The Climate Mayors Economy represents 21% of the U.S. population and roughly 30% of the national economy, while accounting for only 16% of national fossil fuel use.

That lower fuel use already translates into household savings. In 2024, households in Climate Mayors communities saved nearly $1,000 per household compared with what spending would have been at the rest of the country's consumption rates.

Spending less on fossil fuels did not stifle GDP growth.

From 2019–2024, GDP grew 11.3% and population grew 1.2%, while fossil fuel consumption per person fell 3.5%. The report estimates that this translated into $27.2 billion less fossil fuel spending over the five-year period than if 2019 consumption patterns had persisted.

About half of that $27.2 billion reaches household budgets, through lower fuel bills and lower prices on other goods and services.

The next decade could build on that momentum.

Maintaining the 2019–2024 pace could produce $38.4 billion in household savings through 2036, or approximately $1,350 per household.

The benefit isn't limited to fuel bills. The modeled household savings could translate into additional spending throughout local economies, generating an estimated $20.6 billion in GDP growth.

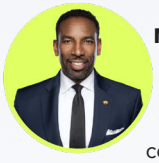
Climate Leadership That is Lowering Household Costs

Mayor Angela Birney, Redmond, WA, is a regional leader in transit-oriented, sustainable growth. The city recently opened four new light rail stations linked to safe biking and walking networks, and adopted transformational zoning updates, including mandatory inclusionary zoning and a multifamily tax exemption, that expand affordable housing near transit, jobs, and services. New green building standards require EV-ready parking and strong energy and embodied-carbon performance, while the city's residential decarbonization program completed 126 heat pump upgrades. As Redmond works toward carbon neutrality by 2050, it is proving cities can be connected, inclusive, and climate-resilient all at once.

Mayor Aftab Pureval, Cincinnati, OH, uses the city's collective purchasing power to make energy more affordable for residents while advancing its clean-energy goals. Through its municipal electricity aggregation program, the City negotiates electricity supply on behalf of participating households, providing residents with a vetted alternative to Duke Energy's standard pricing. The program has historically delivered both lower electricity rates and 100% renewable energy, allowing residents to save money while supporting the city's transition to cleaner power. In 2024, participants in the program saved an average of $154, totaling over $12.4 million.

Mayor Barbara Buffaloe, Columbia, MO, started the Home Rehab & Energy Efficiency Program for low- and moderate-income homeowners. The goal is explicitly to make homes more energy efficient and reduce costs for homeowners, while increasing comfort and easing the burden of energy bills. The city also incorporates its Enhanced Home Performance with Energy Star program into eligible rehab projects, meaning households can receive energy audits and efficiency improvements as part of the city-supported work. Columbia is putting climate action directly into household budgets—helping lower-income homeowners make their homes more efficient, comfortable and affordable to operate.

Mayor Michelle Wu, Boston, MA, launched the Boston Saver Program to help renters, homeowners, and small businesses reduce energy costs through building upgrades. Free one-on-one consultations connect residents to rebates, weatherization, heat pumps, induction stoves, and energy bill check-ups that guard against overcharges. Since launching in March of 2025, the program has served over 450 residents, supported the installation of 2,600 heat pumps, and worked with local energy efficiency providers to direct over $45 million toward decarbonizing small buildings—lowering bills and improving building performance while advancing the city's climate goals.



Mayor Andre Dickens, Atlanta, GA, launched WeatheRISE ATL in 2023 to help Atlanta families cut energy costs, stay comfortable year-round, and breathe cleaner air through free weatherization and energy upgrades. By focusing on neighborhoods where residents spend a disproportionate share of their income on energy bills, the program is saving families money, reducing pollution, and supporting local green jobs. The program received funding in 2025 to expand not only to provide home energy-efficiency improvements but also to offer workforce training opportunities for Atlanta residents. It will place 15 trainees in a workforce development program, where they will learn skills in building science, energy efficiency, HVAC systems, insulation installation, and more. The trainees will then be placed in small businesses to incorporate these upgraded technologies.

Key Finding
3

This is the decade to build on our momentum:

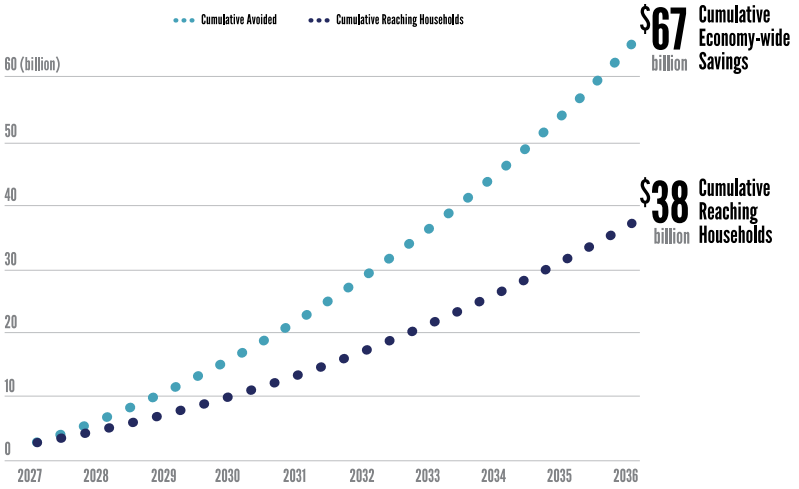
Maintaining the pace set since 2019 would save households $38.4 billion over ten years.

Climate Mayors are building a durable climate movement centered on affordability and community well-being. These mayors continue demonstrating that despite a pandemic and political fluctuations, they can reduce fossil fuel use, grow their economy, create healthier communities and put more money back into households and local businesses.

Maintaining the pace set by members today, this study estimates an economic future where the Climate Mayors Economy saves $67 billion economy-wide between 2027-2036. This results in $38.4 billion in savings for households from a combination of lower transportation costs, lower utility costs and lower prices on everyday purchases like groceries. When businesses spend less on fuel, families experience relief through lower prices on goods and services — a ripple effect worth $5.7 billion in savings on goods and services.

When cities reduce their consumption of fuel used in homes, buildings, and vehicles, this delivers affordability that increases household savings, resulting in families being able to spend more money elsewhere. When families have more money to spend locally, that money goes to neighborhood businesses where it does more for the local economy than buying fuel ever could. The next decade of savings could drive $31 billion in new economic activity. This includes a $21 billion increase in GDP and other economic measures, such as jobs supported and cumulative household savings, that are important to mayors and the communities they serve.

Cumulative savings from maintaining reduction pace, 2027-2036



$38 Billion — Cumulative Household Savings

133,000 Job-years — Jobs Supported

$30 Billion — Increased Economic Output

Job-years measure employment sustained, not necessarily created. Output, GDP, and labor income are nested measures and may not sum due to rounding. Impacts assume that household fuel savings translate into new spending power.

Climate Mayors Accelerating the Pace

Mayor Lauren McLean, Boise, ID - Boise operates the largest direct-use geothermal system in the country, currently serving 100 downtown buildings with clean, low-cost heat and hot water. However, multifamily housing developments have historically been unable to access the system due to regulatory, billing, and infrastructure constraints. At the same time, rising utility costs have placed pressure on household budgets, especially for low-income renters. To address this challenge, speed up climate action and support residents in lowering their energy bills, Boise has secured $1.2 million in funding to expand the city's geothermal network to 300 new affordable homes.

Mayor Keith Wilson, Portland, OR, stewards the voter-created Clean Energy Community Benefits Fund, which invests in energy efficiency, regenerative agriculture, transportation decarbonization, and workforce development, and prioritizes communities most affected by climate change. The Fund has committed hundreds of millions of dollars to projects like Friends of Tryon Creek's forest restoration and Morning Star Church's green infrastructure, building a more just, inclusive, and climate-ready Portland. This Fund has created a mechanism that allows the city to keep scaling climate investment over time.

Climate Mayors are Laying the Groundwork to Accelerate Change

Climate Mayors members are making progress on climate action while laying the groundwork to accelerate it. Across the coalition, mayors are turning climate and economic challenges into opportunities to invest in their communities, lower costs, create jobs, and build more resilient cities.

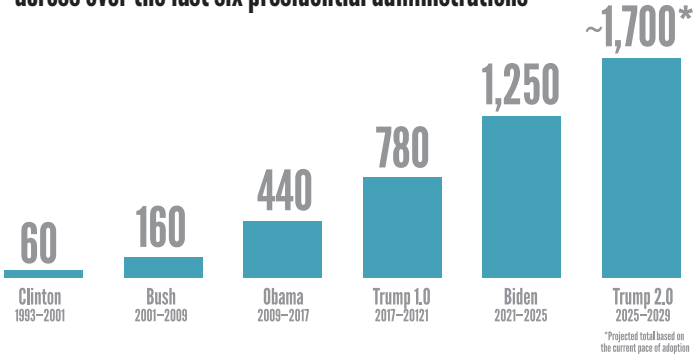
In Boise, ID, Mayor Lauren McLean secured a $1.2 million investment to expand the city's geothermal network to affordable housing, helping connect residents to a lower-cost energy source. In Phoenix, Mayor Kate Gallego launched a new clean-tech hub designed to attract investment and create high-paying jobs in a growing industry. In Atlanta, GA, Mayor Andre Dickens launched the *Housing Affordability Initiative*, using public land to create affordable housing in transit-connected neighborhoods. In Columbia, MO, Mayor Barbara Buffaloe launched the *Home Weatherization Grant Program*, helping residents make their homes more energy efficient and reduce their energy bills.

These city examples are part of a much broader pattern. Policy research shows sustained activity across the sectors that shape household fossil fuel consumption (buildings, transportation, land use, and clean energy) has accelerated, suggesting that the city actions above are not isolated examples, but part of a wider shift in local policy and investment.

This acceleration builds on over 10 years of Climate Mayors members taking bolder and more sustained action on climate. **Under every presidential administration over the last decade, climate momentum has sped up—the number of city climate and clean energy policy adoption has increased**.

In a study by Thomas Consulting Group of 649 local jurisdictions, Climate Mayors members accounted for nearly half — 48.6% — of all U.S. climate policy events during first Trump's administration, even though Climate Mayor membership makes up 21% of the population.

Climate Mayors increasing climate policy adoption across over the last six presidential administrations



Cities are among the most effective and consistent climate actors, turning commitments into implementation on the ground, where people live, and serving as the backstop when the federal government retreats.

These are just a few examples of a much broader story—one that the data makes clear: ***the Climate Mayors Economy is strong, and its progress is measurable.*** Cities are growing while using less fossil fuel per person, and mayors are making investments that can help extend that trajectory.

The next ten years offer an opportunity to accelerate that progress as Climate Mayors are turning lower fossil fuel use into a durable affordability advantage. Climate Mayors members are ready to work with businesses, investors, community partners, and every level of government to scale the investments and policies that are already delivering results. The opportunity is to build on what is working: cleaner energy, more efficient homes and buildings, better-connected communities, and stronger local economies.

The Climate Mayors Economy is already delivering a different kind of economic story. The path forward is to keep building on it—one investment, one community, and one household at a time.

About Climate Mayors:

Climate Mayors is a bipartisan network of mayors representing over 350 member cities, towns, and counties across the United States. Founded in 2014, the network spans 47 states and the District of Columbia, functioning as a peer-to-peer coalition that helps members share climate strategies that work and build support for state and federal action.

About Greenline Insights:

Greenline Insights is a nonpartisan research firm that specializes in energy and economic modeling to support evidence-based decisions at the federal, state, and local level. Established in 2023, the firm provides rigorous quantitative research to public- and private-sector partners with a focus on energy systems, economic development, affordability, supply chains, and more.