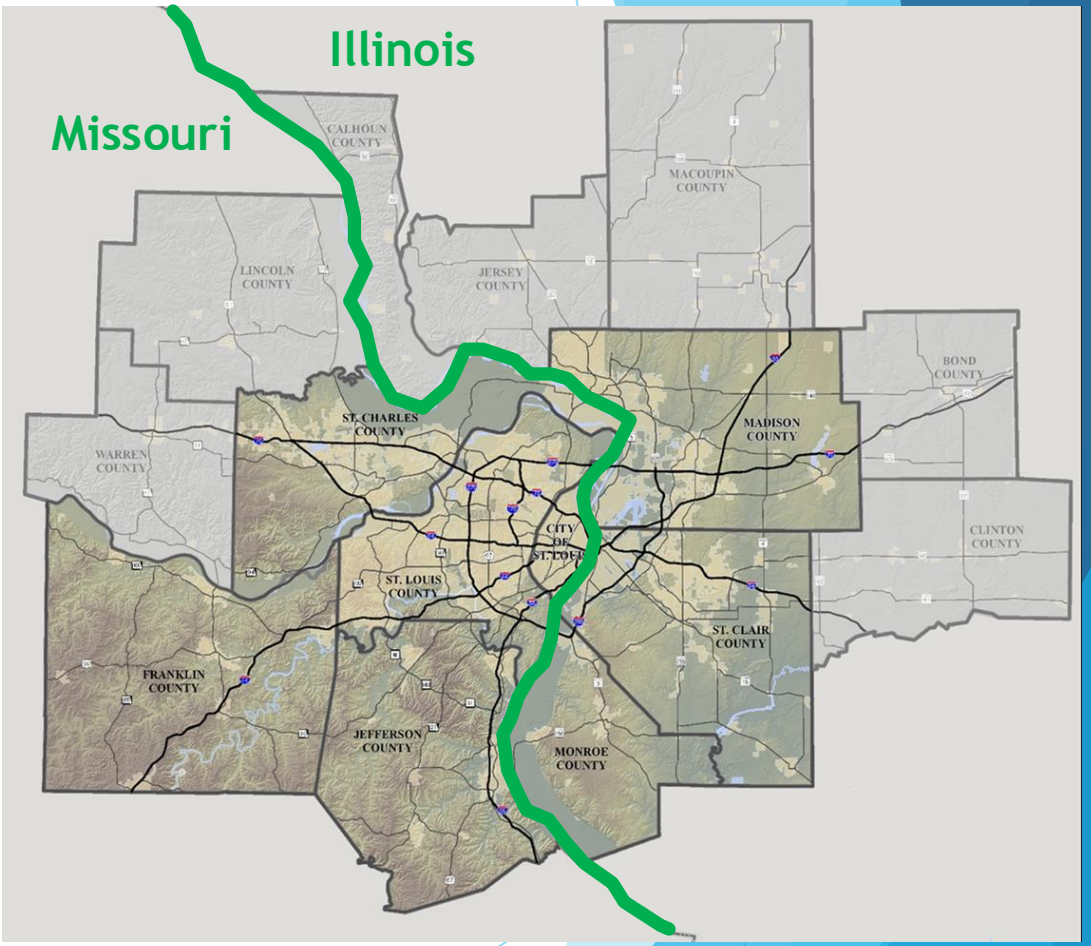
A Climate Action Plan for the St. Louis Region

March 6, 2025 – Prairie State Conservation Coalition Conference

Overview of Grant

- EPA's Climate Pollution Reduction Grant program
- Program funds planning and implementation
  - MO, IL, St. Louis, Kansas City and Chicago received planning grants
  - State of IL received an implementation grant
- Grant program objective is to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, ideally to "Net Zero"



What will be in this plan?

- Identification and analysis of high impact practices to reduce greenhouse gases
- Estimate of other air pollutants reduced
- Estimated community health and financial impacts
- Jobs analysis
  - What's needed to implement/install the projects
  - What training is needed to fill the gaps
- Funding opportunities (?)
- Recommendations only

Sample from Chicago

SUSTAIN **ECOSYSTEMS TO SEQUESTER CARBON**

Growing and sustaining urban forests and natural ecosystems is a nature-based solution that will help meet the region's climate mitigation target. All other mitigation objectives aim to rapidly reduce GHG emissions, while thriving trees, robust landscapes, and the soils that support them, capture CO_2. All communities can plant and protect trees and both public and private property owners can contribute by growing and sustaining healthy urban ecosystems at any scale.

LEAD

- Manage public and private landscapes to optimize ecosystem services and support biodiversity
- Plant trees and sustain the urban forest (also *Encourage* others to do so)

ENCOURAGE

- Encourage citizen tree stewardship
- Encourage property owners to install and maintain sustainable and native landscapes

ENACT

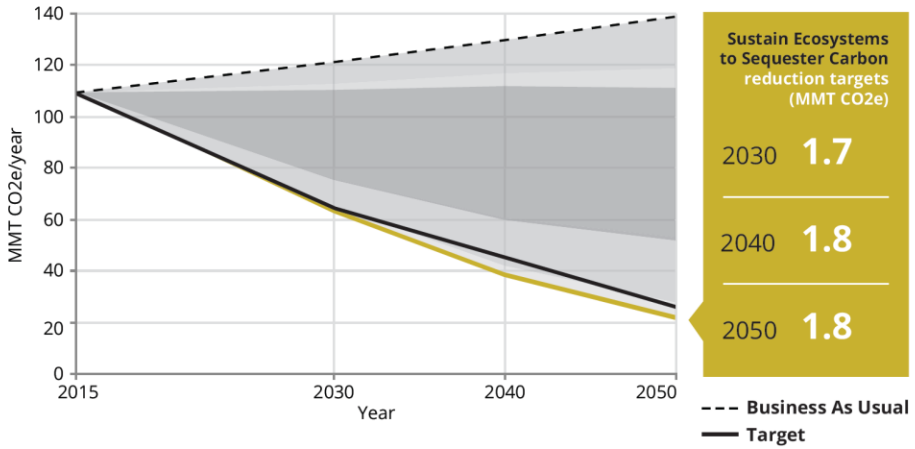
- Preserve soil through low-impact development and restore soil integrity

EQUITY CONSIDERATIONS

- Maintain accessible open space to invite safe and healthful activity
- Sustain tree canopy for cooling benefits in vulnerable communities
- Mitigate and restore nature on contaminated sites in environmental justice communities

OUTCOMES & CO-BENEFITS

- Improve air quality
- Sustainably manages stormwater
- Cooling shade mitigates heat islands
- Low impact construction preserves soil and water quality
- Shade reduces cooling energy demands
- Quality open space encourages active transportation and lifestyles
- Enhances livability and community character
- Supports pollinator and wildlife habitat



Sample from Kansas City

CR-1.2: Conserve and restore the region's riparian (or streamside) corridors

Mitigation ■ | Adaptation ■

Many area jurisdictions adopted stream protection ordinances about 10-15 years ago. While these policies restricted development along streamways (thereby reducing risk to public safety, property and infrastructure), they are not sufficient to mitigate against increased risks of flooding or to enhance ecosystem health along area streams.

Restoring streamside or riparian habitat enables communities to stack multiple benefits from a single investment.

The restoration of connected riparian habitat, according to a recent Kansas State University study, is one of the most important measures to reduce peak flows during storm events while reducing risks of stream channel erosion.

Additional benefits provide for recreation, public health, habitat and biodiversity, and improved air and water quality.

Potential to reduce GHG	Status/Time frame	Scale
High	Underway	Neighborhood, Local Government, Regional, State, and/or Federal

Partners

Public works/planning/parks/stormwater directors, University of Missouri Center for Agroforestry, The Nature Conservancy, The Conservation Fund, Heartland Conservation Alliance, Bridging The Gap

Equity considerations/opportunities

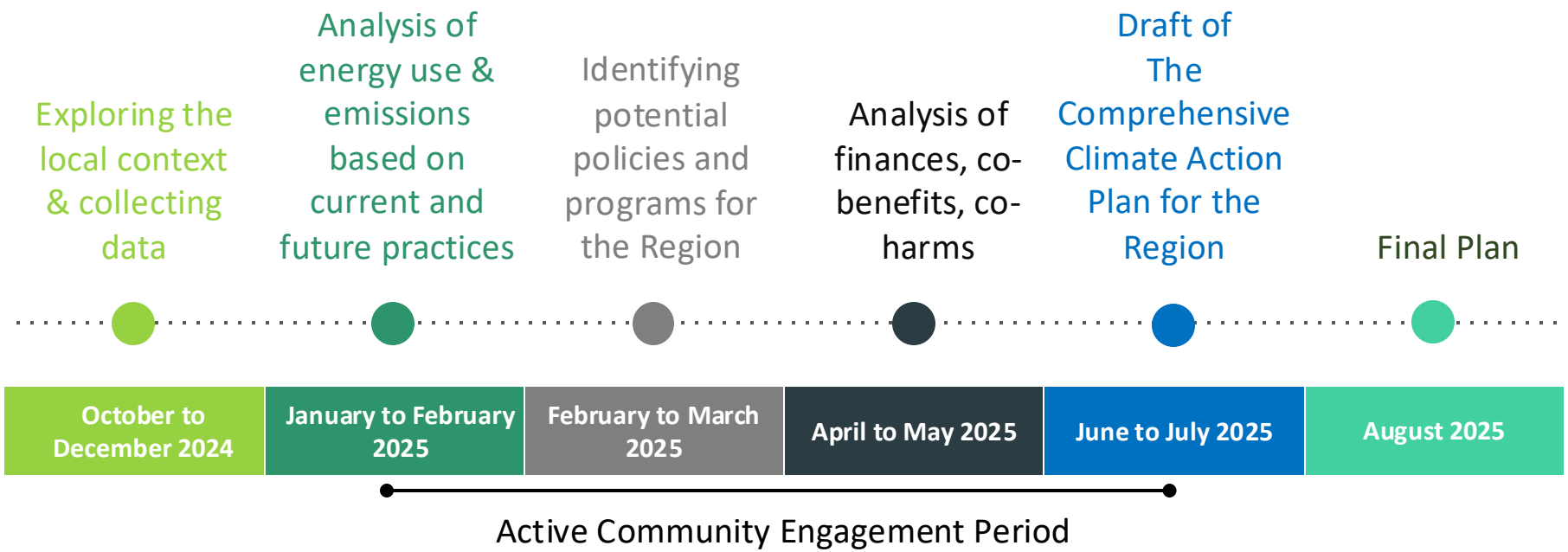
Multi-benefit stream restoration opportunities can mitigate climate risks in vulnerable communities while building community wealth through jobs and business creation.

Examples

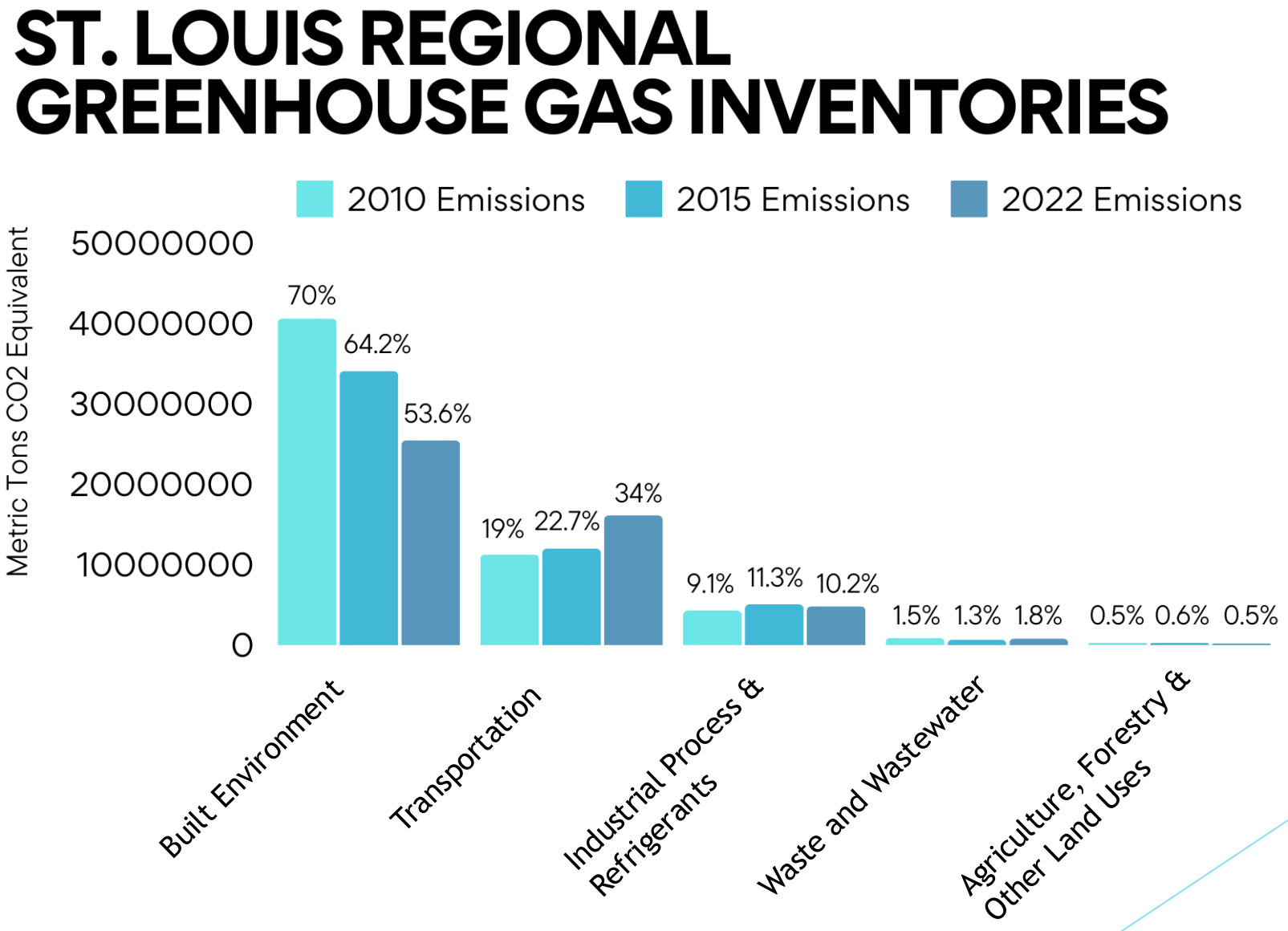
- Stream Corridor Protection and Adaptive Management Manual
- Riparian buffers – National Center for Agroforestry

Action
Develop a pilot interjurisdictional stream/riparian corridor management plan.
Create a project pipeline linked to voluntary carbon offsets to expedite project implementation.
Support use of agroforestry strategies to link food security with natural resource stewardship.

Planning Process



Calculate Emissions



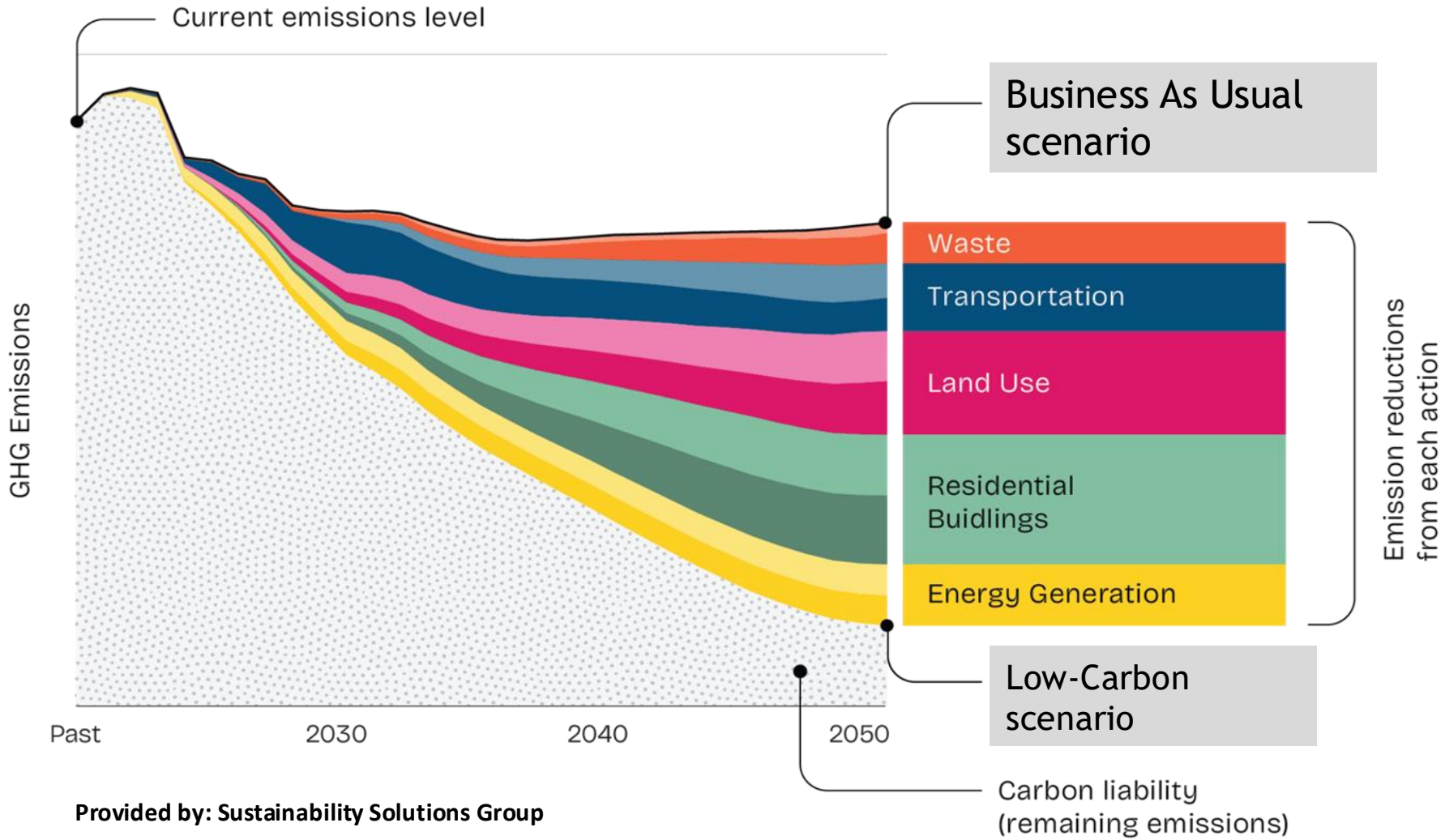
Total Regional Emissions

58,415,579 mtCO2e (2010)

53,065,499 mtCO2e (2015)

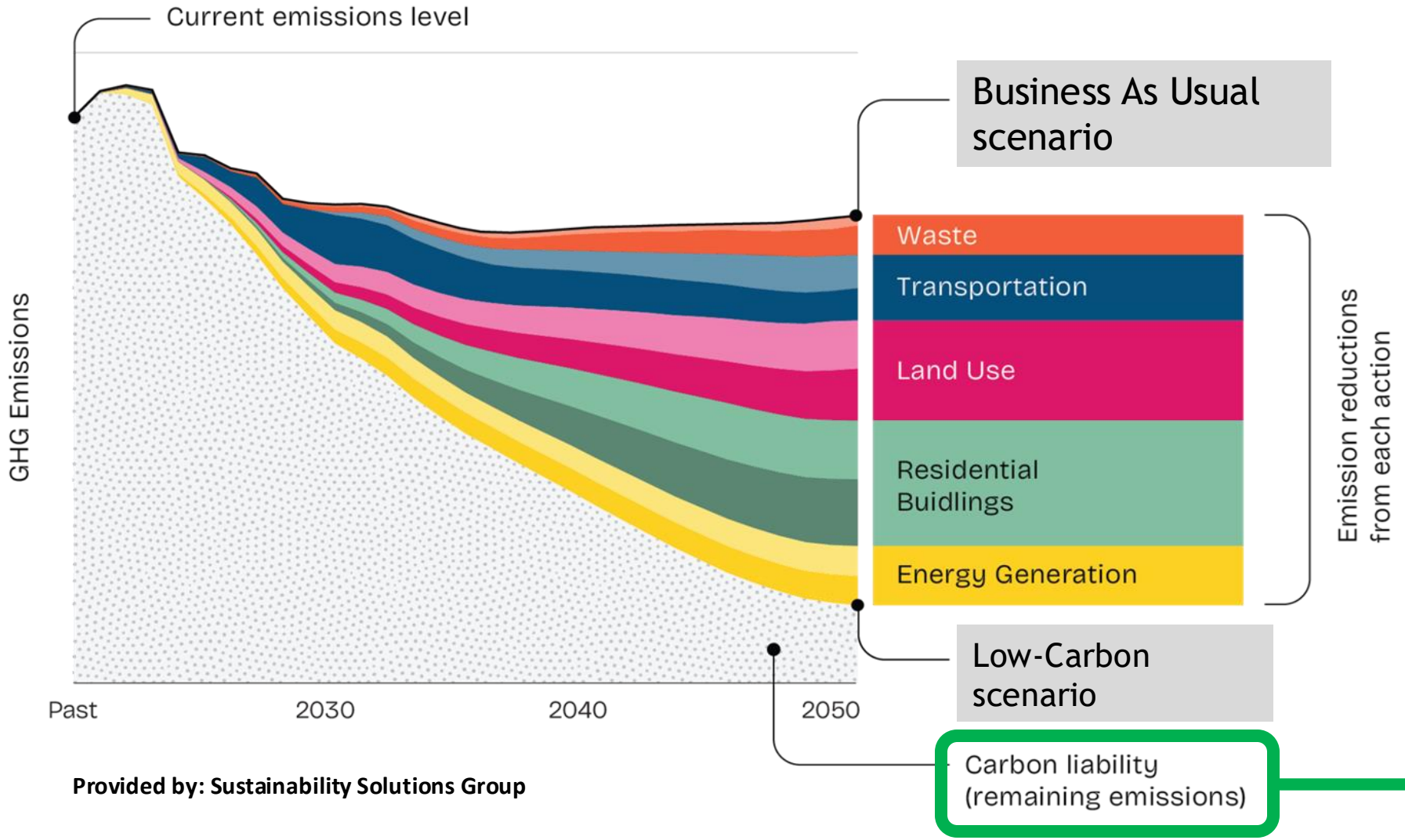
47,441,486 mtCO2e (2022)

Estimate Reductions



Provided by: Sustainability Solutions Group

Estimate Reductions



Provided by: Sustainability Solutions Group

Path to Net Zero must include:

- Forests
- Wetlands
- Prairies
- Regenerative Ag
- Healthy Soils

Engagement will help form the Low-Carbon Scenario and an implementation strategy

- Municipal Workshops
- Focus Groups
- On-line feedback mechanisms
- Open Houses

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