



Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Tennessee Volunteer Emission
Reduction Strategy (TVERS)

Tennessee Department of Environment & Conservation | Updated February 2025



Background

How did Tennessee get this funding?

Tennessee is one of 46 states (and Washington, DC) and 81 Metropolitan Statistical Areas (MSAs) that accepted non-competitive planning funding through the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) Climate Pollution Reduction Grant (CPRG) program. The CPRG planning grant provides each state with \$3M in grant funding (100% federal; no state match required) to complete greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions reduction planning. MSAs received \$1M in non-competitive grant funding to complete similar planning activities. The four states that declined this funding are Florida, Iowa, Kentucky, and South Dakota. The grant period is four years, running Summer 2023 to Summer 2027.

Why the “Volunteer” in Tennessee Volunteer Emission Reduction Strategy (TVERS)?

As the Volunteer State, Tennessee has a rich history of volunteerism. Through TVERS, TDEC is focusing on voluntary or incentive-based activities that reduce greenhouse gas emissions and other air pollutants. While other states have imposed mandates to reduce emissions, we hope to reach established goals through voluntary measures that may differ throughout the state.

Does Tennessee have an existing emissions reduction plan?

Tennessee does not have an existing statewide emissions reduction plan. Many of Tennessee's municipalities have climate, energy, and/or sustainability plans, including [Nashville](#), [Knoxville](#), [Memphis](#), and [Chattanooga](#).

Where can I learn more?

TDEC is posting all updates on the TVERS [website](#). We also encourage you to sign up for our [listserv](#). The EPA has additional CPRG resources about both the planning and implementation phases. They have also published [training, tools, and technical assistance](#) to support in the development of grant deliverables.

What will TDEC produce through the TVERS effort?

TDEC is required to produce three deliverables: a Priority Plan by March 1, 2024; a Comprehensive Action Plan by Summer 2025; and a status report by the end of the grant award period. The two plans will contain “measures,” or activities that aim to reduce emissions.

Planning Funding

What is a “measure”?

TDEC is required to identify GHG reduction measures and quantify the GHG emission reductions from these measures as part of the Priority Plan and the Comprehensive Plan. Measures describe activities or programs that reduce greenhouse gas or other air pollutants. Measures in the Priority Plan and Comprehensive Plan must be able to be quantified, e.g. attribute a GHG emission reduction to that measure using approved tools. Measures are primarily discussed at the sector level and vary in impact on GHG emissions.

What are some examples of measures that may be included in the plan?

The Priority Plan and Comprehensive Plan both require states to provide quantified greenhouse gas (GHG) emission reduction measures. These measures represent strategies of different scales of how states will reduce GHG emissions to meet reduction goals. The EPA published a directory of [Quantified Climate Action Measures](#) that presents information on quantified GHG measures in state and local climate action plans published between January 2018 and August 2023.

For example, measures for the transportation and building sector could include:

- Transportation: transitioning to low- or zero-emission vehicles, reducing carbon intensity of fuels, and expanding transportation options (biking, walking, public transit).
- Commercial and Residential Buildings: increasing energy efficiency through incentive programs, weatherization retrofits, building codes and standards, and increasing electrification.

How does the plan address workforce development?

TDEC is developing a workforce planning analysis for the Comprehensive Plan due in December 2025. We intend for this analysis to be comprehensive and address creation of jobs, training opportunities, and other aspects of workforce development. We anticipate working closely with the Tennessee Department of Labor, the Tennessee Workforce Development Board, local workforce development efforts, community-based organizations, colleges and universities, and other partners to align climate planning efforts with partners with expertise in job quality and workforce development.

Why does the Emission Reduction Planning Advisory Committee (ERPAC) not include a representative from X or Y group?

The ERPAC includes representatives from agencies and offices involved in environmental protection, energy, utilities, transportation, housing, and other sectors that involve emissions reductions. We recognize that the ERPAC is not inclusive of every organization or group working on these issues. However, we are intentionally keeping the advisory committee to approximately 20 individuals/organizations to ensure we receive meaningful participation and feedback. Beyond the ERPAC, TDEC is leveraging existing and new partnerships to ensure interdisciplinary stakeholders are informed and engaged throughout the planning grant lifecycle.

What is a greenhouse gas (GHG) inventory?

A GHG inventory is a historical accounting of the amount of greenhouse gases emitted to, or removed from, the atmosphere over a specific period of time from all activities across the economy. A state GHG inventory documents the activities that cause GHG emissions and removals within the state. The GHG inventory that Tennessee is developing for TVERS is organized by the following economic sectors: Transportation, Electric Power, Industry, Residential and Commercial Buildings, Agriculture and Working Lands, and Waste Management.

Will you be doing additional public and stakeholder outreach for the Comprehensive Plan?

Yes, we will be doing another round of public and stakeholder engagement for the Comprehensive Plan, which is due to EPA in December 2025. We anticipate having both virtual and in-person opportunities for interested community members to learn more and share feedback. The best way to stay up to date on public and stakeholder engagement opportunities is to sign up for our [listserv](#).

Implementation Funding

Is my city/ town/ community eligible for implementation funding?

All states and MSAs that accepted planning funding are eligible to apply for implementation funding. Implementation grant applications can be submitted by the lead agency or any entity that did not directly receive planning grant funds but are seeking to implement one or more measures included in the Priority Plan. Any measure submitted as part of a competitive implementation grant application must be included in a Priority Plan. Additionally, if your area

is covered by the Knoxville, Memphis, or Nashville MSA then you may also be eligible to apply for measures within the MSA plan.

Has funding for implementation been awarded by the EPA?

The EPA announced that 25 applications were selected for implementation funding in Summer 2024. The 25 applications were comprised of 13 state applicants, 11 municipal applicants, and 1 Tribal applicant that will total to serve 30 states. TDEC was not awarded implementation funding at this stage, however, the Department will continue consider the potential implementation of projects detailed in the Priority Plan.

Are any new regulations expected through TVERS?

There are no mandates or new regulations required through TVERS. The EPA is not requiring states, tribes, or local governments to promulgate new/expanded regulations or enforce new/expanded mandates through this program. TDEC will focus on voluntary/incentive-based activities that reduce greenhouse gas emissions and other air pollutants.

Is TDEC going to release information about the implementation funding?

The EPA has announced the competition for CPRG implementation grants, in which eligible applicants can apply for funding to implement measures contained in a state or MSA Priority Plan. EPA anticipates awarding individual grants between \$2 million and \$500 million. We encourage interested applicants to find further information on EPA's website, including the Notice of Funding Opportunity, deadlines, application information, and trainings/ webinars.