



Return on Climate Action Tool

Frequently Asked Questions

What is the Return on Climate Action Tool?

The Tool is a customizable ranking system designed to help cities prioritize the actions they will take on climate issues. It provides King County cities with a common and defensible decision-making framework that has been pre-populated with the top climate actions that are relevant for our local communities. It was meant to *supplement* existing decision-making standards and community engagement processes, not replace them.

How was the Tool developed?

The Tool was developed to supplement the King County Climate Action Toolkit, which was made possible by King County and the King County Cities Climate Collaboration. The pre-populated actions in the Return on Climate Action Tool were pulled directly from the body of the Toolkit (see Section 8), which includes only the highest-rated actions chosen for King County cities. These were chosen based on comprehensive research of local and national city-oriented climate resources, stakeholder feedback, and the expertise of the developers.

When should I use the Tool?

The Tool was designed to be used during a city's climate action planning process. It may be used to help determine which actions should be included in your next Climate Action Plan, or simply to demonstrate/communicate what types of considerations should be included in climate action planning.

Who should use the Tool?

The Tool was designed to be used by city staff, councilmembers, and other elected officials as a tool to support decision making on climate action planning. A city may also determine to use the tool (or parts of the tool) externally to engage community members and advocacy groups as part of the stakeholder engagement process.

How do I use the Tool?

The Tool holds actions for both community-based emissions, such as energy use from residential buildings, as well as government operations-based emissions, such as energy use from government-owned buildings. For each of these categories, you will **score actions and weigh criteria in the dark-colored Scoring Sheet tabs**. The other tabs will auto-populate with ranked actions but are locked from editing to preserve the functionality of the tool.

How do I weight the criteria?

The five (5) criteria of the Return on Climate Action Tool (columns C-G) were pre-determined based on extensive research and local stakeholder engagement. Altering the weights of the criteria will affect

which actions rise to the top based on which criteria hold the most value (cost saving actions, emissions reducing actions, etc.).

The weights must add up to 100% (see cell H4) to ensure an accurate scorecard. It is not recommended that you alter the criteria categories. This ensures consistency across all cities within King County.

Watch this [video](#) for a demonstration on how to weight criteria.

How do I score the actions?

The actions have been pre-populated with the top actions found during the development of the Climate Action Toolkit. The default scores reflect how the corresponding action might impact an average city size and type based on findings from extensive research and local stakeholder engagement during the development process. Altering these scores will affect which actions rise to the top in the ranking tabs.

The 1-5 scores are defined in row 3 (low emissions reduction potential vs. high emissions reduction potential) and will pop up when you click into a particular scoring cell. Use this guidance when scoring your actions. As a rule, 5 = Good and 1 = Bad. The higher the score, the higher the action rises on your rankings.

Watch this [video](#) for a demonstration on how to score actions.

Can I modify, change, or delete the pre-populated actions?

Yes, you can modify the existing actions by clearing the cell and typing in a new action. You cannot, however, delete or add a row (this option is locked to preserve the functionality of the Tool). If you are not using a particular row, you can clear the action and its corresponding scores by selecting the cells and pressing the Delete key on your keyboard or right-clicking and selecting Clear Contents.

Modifying actions may be particularly useful if:

- Your city is undergoing an update to your current Climate Action Plan and you'd like to include outstanding actions in the next update
- Your city has already completed an action that is pre-populated in the tool
- Your city would like to include one or more of the 300+ additional actions listed in Appendix E of the Climate Action Toolkit

Watch this [video](#) for a demonstration on how to modify actions.

How do I assign the additional considerations?

The additional considerations (columns I-K) have been assigned based on extensive research and local stakeholder engagement completed during the development of the Climate Action Toolkit. The default considerations pre-populated in the tool reflect an average city size and type and should be reviewed and altered as necessary to fit your unique community.

Simply select the dropdown arrow and choose Yes or No if the action has any effect on the corresponding consideration.

Watch this [video](#) for a demonstration on how to assign additional considerations.

How do I interpret my results?

The results tabs will reflect the scores that you have entered in the Scoring Sheet tabs for both community and government-based actions, respectively. The 'Top 10' tab will show you only the Top 10 actions in the various categories, while the 'All' tab will show you the full ranked list of all actions.

Overall (column B): The overall ranking list shows the top actions when the weighting is applied to the scores given to produce a weighted score and rank.

Specific Criteria (columns E-R): The specific criteria rankings show all the actions that were given a high score of 5 for each criteria category. This list only considers a single criterion rather than the weighted average (e.g., top actions for reducing emissions only, not considering resources required, equity, etc.).

Additional Considerations (columns E-L below): The additional consideration rankings show the weighted scores for all actions where that consideration applies (e.g., top weighted actions for improving public health).

Watch this [video](#) for a demonstration on how to interpret your results.

What to do if I get an error message when using the Tool?

If you are receiving an error message, try the following troubleshooting techniques:

- Double check that you have clicked Enable Content in the yellow pop-up bar at the top of the excel sheet.
- Re-download the excel and be sure to save it as an Excel Macro-Enabled Workbook (.xlsm) on a local drive such as your Desktop or under My Documents.
- Be sure you have the most recent version of Microsoft Office Suite. Upgrade your version if necessary.
- Check with your IT department to see if they can identify the problem.

