

# New Year, New Priorities

*In 2021, Santa Fe Focuses on Recovery and Healing*

*This article appears in the January/February issue of Green Fire Times, which is devoted to Issues to Watch in New Mexico in 2021.*



**By Mayor Alan Webber**

The sustainability highlight for 2020: Santa Fe became the second city in the world to earn LEED Gold certification under the newest, more stringent rating system. That award for Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design from the U.S. Green Building Council recognizes our work toward sustainability in energy, water, waste, transportation, education, health, safety, prosperity, and equity. We've made good progress in the last few years, with much to be proud of and much to take credit for. We're becoming the most eco-friendly city in America on the way to achieving carbon neutrality by 2040. Great news for Santa Fe and for the planet.

But the outset of 2021 isn't a time for taking a victory lap. COVID has revealed an even larger agenda that we must address. Though Santa Fe has showed great resilience as a community, we're still in the grips of the pandemic, a public health crisis that is now a socio-economic crisis. Once we get past the threat of this coronavirus, 2021 will be a year for healing—a year in which we're called to address the underlying issues exposed by COVID. The virus altered everything in ways small and large—our families and lives, our mom-and-pop businesses, our tourist economy, the schools our kids go to, and our City government. Most profoundly, it ripped the Band-Aid off of inequality and exposed its severe consequences.

Our mission for 2021 is to focus our efforts on creating equity in health care, food security, economic opportunity, education, and affordable housing.

And yes, this is also a year for sticking to the Sustainable Santa Fe 25-Year Plan and investing in the Santa Fe Green New Deal, which will help us heal from the economic and social pain suffered in 2020. We'll address climate change and create badly needed local jobs. We'll see ecology and economy working together the more we invest in green initiatives.

We'll save money, energy, and water by installing solar energy panels on 17 City facilities, retrofitting 9,000 streetlights to LEDs, and upgrading 700 water fixtures. That will cut our utility costs by 20 percent. We're planning to implement this \$15.5 million project in 2021, producing energy savings, environmental improvements, and good local jobs.

In 2020, we constructed a combined heat-and-power generator at the wastewater treatment plant. The combination of this new system and the existing solar array means that 94 percent of the power for processing our wastewater comes from renewable sources. We'll

commitment to producing affordable housing in livable, sustainable neighborhoods where people want to work, raise families, and put down roots. Progressive planning for Midtown and the South Side will go far toward enhancing the quality of life for families, especially younger Santa Feans who have suffered from the lack of in-person education and activities.

We're continuing to modernize operations by launching The Santa Fe Data Platform, a website that provides real-time data on population, tourism, public health, and the economy. This platform conveys complex information in the most accessible way possible. It will enable more transparency for everyone and better decision making inside City government. Another benefit: It supports the continued development of our growing tech sector and the strength of our health care providers, who have given us so much under such difficult conditions.

In 2020, we made strong, steady and important progress toward our ambitious sustainability goals. In Santa Fe, we know that climate change is real—and we treasure the beauty and fragility of this place we love

*We're becoming the most eco-friendly city in America on the way to achieving carbon neutrality by 2040.*

reap those benefits in 2021 and beyond. The investments we're making will pay for themselves in the long run.

2021 will also mark another step in our transition to electric vehicles. We'll purchase 23 electric vehicles for use in seven City departments. We'll move toward renewable energy and cleaner air—and offer charging stations for everyone to use.

Dedicated employees across City departments will remain relentless in their work on water conservation, recycling, waste reduction, the public-health-conscious upgrading of our parks, and the eco-friendly beautification of our medians.

We'll continue to execute on our

and call home.

Because this is our home and we are family, the new year also brings with it a mandate to engage in an inclusive process of community engagement, in which all of our underlying equity issues can be discussed. We're committed to a citywide, grassroots conversation about our histories and our culture. Our goal is a healing process based on a greater understanding of and commitment to our shared values.

Here's wishing all of us a 2021 filled with health and happiness, recovery and healing. At the City, we're committed to doing more, investing smarter, and continuing our work for a green future that combines social equity, environmental sustainability, and a strong economy.



# ON THE ROAD TO CARBON NEUTRAL (BY 2040)

- IMPROVING FACILITIES TO SAVE WATER/ENERGY
- INCREASING RENEWABLE ENERGY
- ELECTRIFYING FLEET VEHICLES
- USING ALTERNATIVE FUELS
- REDUCING WASTE BY RECYCLING/COMPOSTING
- WORKING TOGETHER TO ACHIEVE GOALS

Upgrading 9,000 lighting fixtures and 760 water fixtures.  
Installing high-efficiency infrastructure.  
Fixing 200 ft<sup>2</sup> of air leakage.

Did you know?

Nine facilities currently use renewable energy.  
Planning has begun to add renewable energy to another 17 facilities.\*

The combined savings from facility improvements and renewable energy installations will allow the City to save 20% on its utility bills. This leaves more taxpayer money available for other services!

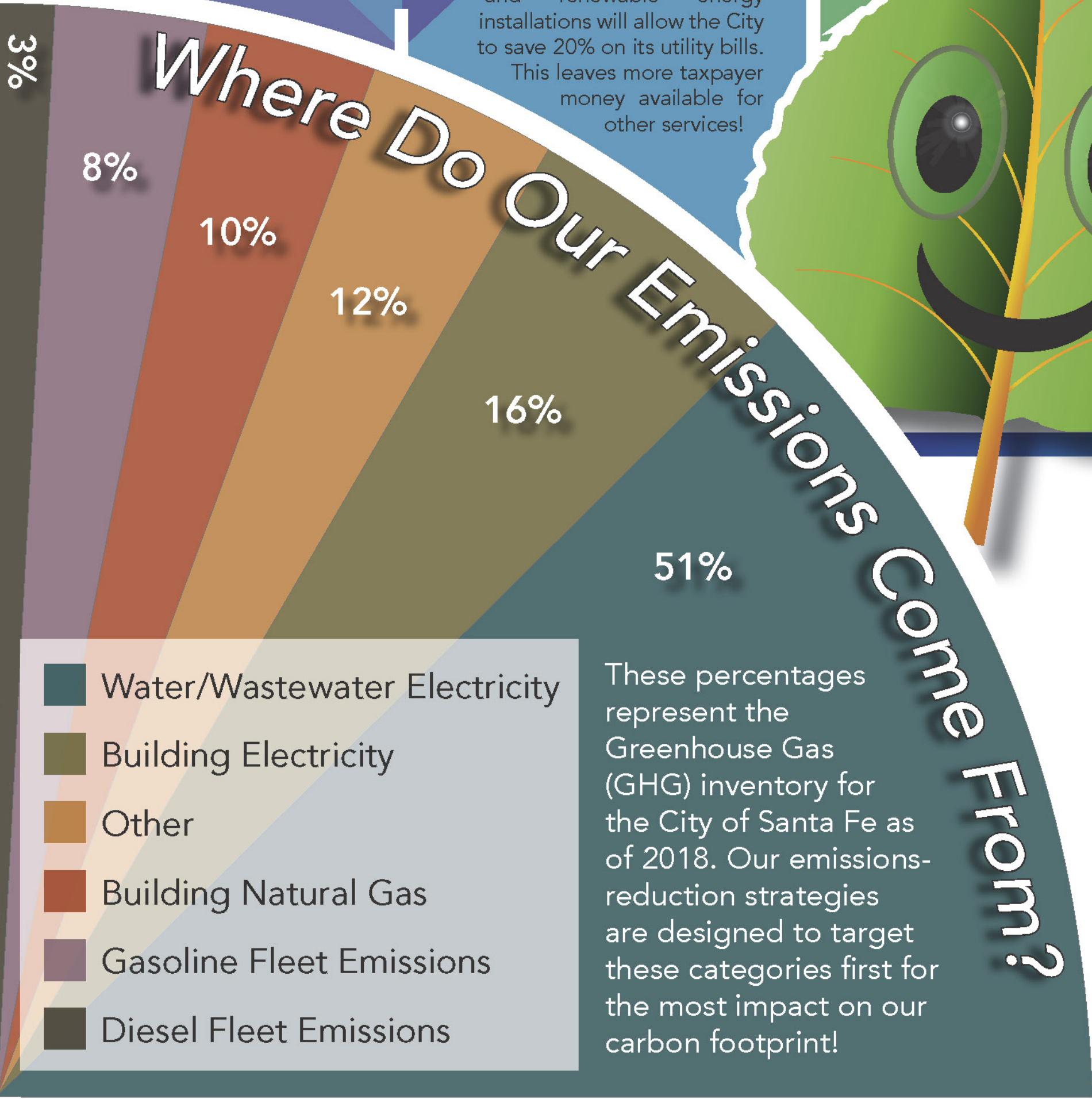
Non-emergency passenger cars (87 total) are being transitioned to electric or hybrid by 2025.  
In Santa Fe, electric cars emit 70% less!

The Santa Fe Trails buses and the Environmental Services trash/recycling trucks run on compressed natural gas (CNG).  
Modern CNG engines are so efficient, they have almost zero emissions!

In addition to recycling in offices, the City is composting food waste from senior centers and material from the wastewater treatment process.  
All debris from street projects are reused and recycled.

The Carbon Offset, Reduction, and Elimination by 2040 (CORE 40) Team brings City employees across departments together to collaborate on sustainability efforts.

Did you know? The Santa Fe Community Convention Center is a LEED Gold Certified building. LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) is a certification that means the building is more energy efficient and produces less waste products than it would otherwise.

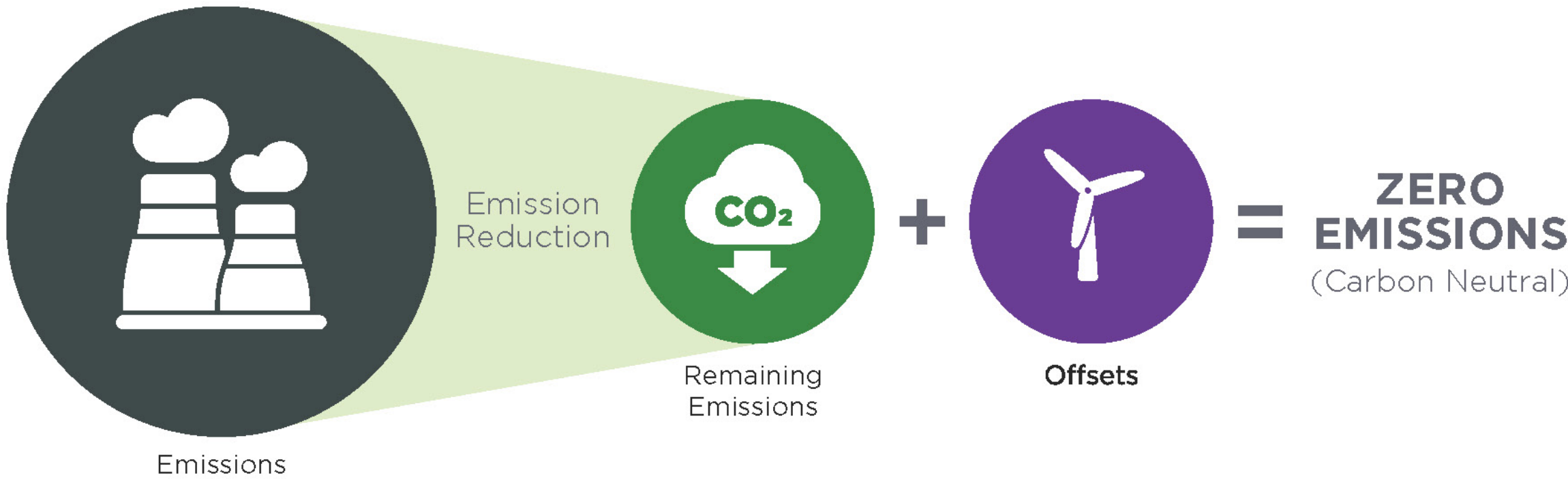


## YOU CAN GET INVOLVED TOO:

- Schedule a PNM Home Energy Audit to find out how you can improve the energy efficiency of your building (and save money!)
- Take advantage of water-saving rebates from the City's Water Conservation Office.
- Consider investing in solar panels or an electric vehicle - tax credits are available to help with the upfront costs!

\*Financing is pending for these projects.

## WHAT DOES "CARBON NEUTRAL" MEAN?



**Offsets** = the purchase of credits that reduce emissions elsewhere.  
**Emissions** = harmful greenhouse gases that contribute to climate change.



# New Year, New Priorities

## In 2021, Santa Fe Focuses on Recovery and Healing

This article appears in the January/February issue of *Green Fire Times*, which is devoted to Issues to Watch in New Mexico in 2021.

By Mayor Alan Webber

The sustainability highlight for 2020: Santa Fe became the second city in the world to earn LEED Gold certification under the newest, more stringent rating system. That award for Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design from the U.S. Green Building Council recognizes our work toward sustainability in energy, water, waste, transportation, education, health, safety, prosperity, and equity. We've made good progress in the last few years, with much to be proud of and much to take credit for. We're becoming the most eco-friendly city in America on the way to achieving carbon neutrality by 2040. Great news for Santa Fe and for the planet.

But the outset of 2021 isn't a time for taking a victory lap. COVID has revealed an even larger agenda that we must address. Though Santa Fe has showed great resilience as a community, we're still in the grips of the pandemic, a public health crisis that is now a socio-economic crisis. Once we get past the threat of this coronavirus, 2021 will be a year for healing—a year in which we're called to address the underlying issues exposed by COVID. The virus altered everything in ways small and large—our families and lives, our mom-and-pop businesses, our tourist economy, the schools our kids go to, and our City government. Most profoundly, it ripped the Band-Aid off of inequality and exposed its severe consequences.

Our mission for 2021 is to focus our efforts on creating equity in health care, food security, economic opportunity, education, and affordable housing.

And yes, this is also a year for sticking to the Sustainable Santa Fe 25-Year Plan and investing in the Santa Fe Green New Deal, which will help us heal from the economic and social pain suffered in 2020. We'll address climate change *and* create badly needed local jobs. We'll see ecology and economy working together the more we invest in green initiatives.

We'll save money, energy, and water by installing solar energy panels on 17 City facilities, retrofitting 9,000 streetlights to LEDs, and upgrading 700 water fixtures. That will cut our utility costs by 20 percent. We're planning to implement this \$15.5 million project in 2021, producing energy savings, environmental improvements, and good local jobs.

In 2020, we constructed a combined heat-and-power generator at the wastewater treatment plant. The combination of this new system and the existing solar array means that 94 percent of the power for processing our wastewater comes from renewable sources. We'll reap those benefits in 2021 and beyond. The investments we're making will pay for themselves in the long run.

2021 will also mark another step in our transition to electric vehicles. We'll purchase 23 electric vehicles for use in seven City departments. We'll move toward renewable energy and cleaner air—and offer charging stations for everyone to use.

Dedicated employees across City departments will remain relentless in their work on water conservation, recycling, waste reduction, the public-health-conscious upgrading of our parks, and the eco-friendly beautification of our medians.

We'll continue to execute on our commitment to producing affordable housing in livable, sustainable neighborhoods where people want to work, raise families, and put down roots. Progressive planning for Midtown and the South Side will go far toward enhancing the quality of life for families, especially younger Santa Feans who have suffered from the lack of in-person education and activities.

We're continuing to modernize operations by launching The Santa Fe Data Platform, a website that provides real-time data on population, tourism, public health, and the economy. This platform conveys complex information in the most accessible way possible. It will enable more transparency for everyone and better decision making inside City government. Another benefit: It supports the continued development of our growing tech sector and the strength of our health care providers, who have given us so much under such difficult conditions.

In 2020, we made strong, steady and important progress toward our ambitious sustainability goals. In Santa Fe, we know that climate change is real—and we treasure the beauty and fragility of this place we love and call home.

Because this is our home and we are family, the new year also brings with it a mandate to engage in an inclusive process of community engagement, in which all of our underlying equity issues can be discussed. We're committed to a citywide, grassroots conversation about our histories and our culture. Our goal is a healing process based on a greater understanding of and commitment to our shared values.

Here's wishing all of us a 2021 filled with health and happiness, recovery and healing. At the City, we're committed to doing more, investing smarter, and continuing our work for a green future that combines social equity, environmental sustainability, and a strong economy.