

Main Proposal

The initial situation

Wolfratshausen is a small town in the south of Munich with 20.000 inhabitants. Climate protection has so far been neglected in this town, although it is actually located in a high-risk area for heavy rainfall. It is true that the town council adopted an energy use plan in 2016, in which the town was to have 92% renewable energy by 2022, and also declared a state of climate emergency (Klimanotstand) in 2019. Unfortunately, no measures were adopted to implement climate protection.

For the past 2 years, concerned citizens have united under the name *WOR For Future* to demand more action. With monthly demonstrations in front of the city council, biannual assemblies for the "Climate strike" and press releases, we could draw attention to the issue of local climate protection so far. For example, an analysis by us was able to show that renewable energies are still at a good 15% - only 3% more than in 2016. Our group consists currently of 50-70 people, of which ~15 people form an active core.

However there is a very conservative mindset in the town. We face resistance to concrete measures from the city council and lack of awareness of the climate crisis by our citizens. We all live in this uncomfortable dichotomy - we know somewhere deep that the situation is bad and at the same time we just try to live on normally and hide it over and over again

A positive vision as a first step



What we perceive as one of the main causes of resistance to action - not only locally, but in general - is the fear of change. "*But everything is fine as it is,*" some counter. - Is it? New crises such as inflation, the energy crisis - and climate change in particular - are tightening their grip on us. But we can do something about it, because a municipality has many levers to shape change itself instead of being helplessly changed by the many major crises.

If we do not act, we will lose many things that are dear to us. This applies internationally, nationally, but also on our own doorstep. Through positive change in our city, we can preserve our homeland - and together make it even better than before.

We want to take away the fear of the citizens with this address and [a positive vision of a climate neutral city in the future](#). To this end, we have written future perspectives for the four areas "*green, livable city*", "*energy and heat produced locally*", "*fossil-free mobility*" and "*future-proof building fabric*". We describe what needs are fulfilled and people can gain instead of losing something. We

backed them up with many best practice examples of measures from other cities, similar in size

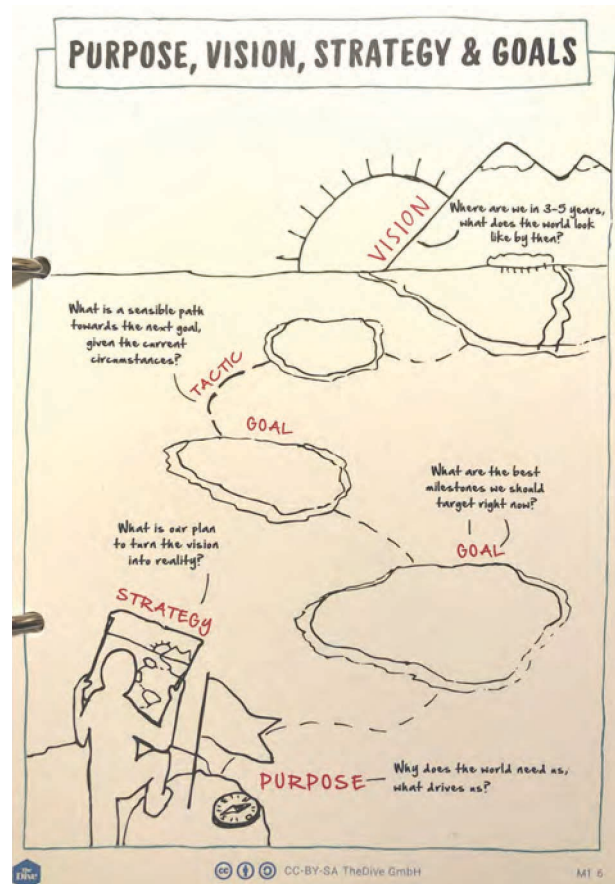
to ours, that can also be used to achieve this. All these areas of action translate into a climate neutral city: “*Wolfratshausen klimaneutral*”.

Implementation of the vision with a strategy

Our vision is our north star for the next few years, and step by step we want to achieve our vision. Our strategy comprises different goals moving forward to succeed. This is not a linear process. The tactics to achieve these goals may need to be adapted and some of these goals are being pursued parallel. In the following we describe these goals and some of the measures to reach these:

#1 Increased climate awareness in the population to generate need of urgency

Why: Too often, this issue feels abstract and overwhelming. Many people tend to fall into the psychological trap of cognitive dissonance of competing needs when it comes to dealing with the climate crises. People then deny urgency, justify their behavior and simply ignore it to avoid taking action personally. However, to overcome a crisis of this magnitude, we truly need everyone’s contribution. The rightful anger of the younger ones among us and the stamina of the older ones. History shows that massive change always happened when enough people stopped believing in an old story and embraced a better story. This is when politics start moving as well.



What and How: change perceptions of different audience with regular communication

- We have established already various **demonstrations** in our town like the bi-annual “*Climate Strike*” and the “*Kidical Mass*” to make our ask publicly visible. After each event we have gained supporters and attracted [press articles](#) in *Süddeutsche Zeitung* and *Merkur*. We can boost such efforts with digital advertising and targeting local associations (Vereine)
- As a result of talks with the mayor, we will co-host **get-togethers** on different climate topics with the city. The first event is scheduled for July 6th with focus on local renewable energy and heating. This event will consist of impulse talks, podium discussions and poster sessions. We could gain as speakers participants from the Energiewende Oberland and from Wildpoldsried (a best practice example). These events will enable us a platform to get in contact with citizens who usually don’t go to demonstrations. In addition the cooperation with the city enables trust building to stakeholders in the city administration.
- We have started to use the **group experience** “[The week](#)” with very good results on mobilization. “*The week*” is a concept where groups of people watch three documentary film episodes and follow up with a guided conversation to make sense of it all. The multiplication effect can be tremendous, e.g. one of our participants of our first theWeek

session is professor at the university of cologne. She asked her 380 students to do *theWeek* within 1 month by self-organizing into groups (incl. family and friends). She offered as well to the students that they can write an essay about *theWeek* and earn credit points. The feedback she got from the students was very positive and strong - more than 90 groups were created. We are currently expanding this event to our workplaces with very positive feedback and testing it as an offer at the local VHS (kind of an Adult Education Center for everyone with a Programm offer going to every household). Further ideas for expansion aim at local schools.

- We participate in local events like “Stadtradeln” (competition on which group cycles the most in 3 weeks) and give press interviews to local newspapers to create visibility of our cause.



#2 Push implementation of measures by city administration and citizens in our fields of action

Why: Our town had already claimed ambitious targets to reduce CO2 emissions in the past, e.g. a target for renewable energy. What was lacking was a translation into action. The typical response by local politicians is to point to lack of resources and money or that suggestions aren't feasible. This lack of priority can be changed if the inaction is made visible, best practice examples are made public and voters demand action.

What and How: Create momentum from mobilization in #1 for political action

- We have researched best practice examples from towns at the same size as Wolfratshausen and listed them in our vision. From this list we will select suitable proposals to transfer into our town, e.g. restructuring of local public utilities, a photovoltaic obligation on new buildings or creating a mobility concept with citizen participation.
- We started talks with willing local politicians (Green party and SPD) as well as the mayor. One of the results was the agreement for the joint event. By emphasizing our

non-partisanship and on the basis of our vision, we also want to reach out to the other political groups. Ideally, they support our proposals or at least do not oppose them.

- Depending on the result of talks other measures can come to use, e.g. proposals at the citizens' assembly or referendums. We are being advised by the initiative "*Klimawende von unten*" ([Climate Change from Below](#)) on legal questions and needed skills. Experience with referendums in Bavaria show that while gathering signatures for referendums, many people can be attracted and grassroots momentum grows.
- These proposals will be promoted with flyers, brochures, and ads.



#3 Networking and Scaling

Why: Our own resources are limited and sharing, learning and supporting other climate activist initiatives can boost our joint efforts. Finding allies in local associations (Vereine) can boost our efforts.

What and How:

- We build and maintain networks to various climate activism initiatives. We have delegates in *Parents for Future* (P4F) and *Friday for Future* (F4F)- in particular in Munich or other larger towns in Germany. Via the *Klimawende von unten* from a Campaigning weekend workshop we have additional contacts to groups across Germany with similar aspirations, e.g. Würzburg, Kassel and other towns. Here we already shared our vision as a blueprint and other concepts described above to scale these approaches.
- We succeeded to even grow during the Corona time, whereas other initiatives in small towns around us have been struggling. We are trying to revive local P4F or F4F movements by exchange with individuals in these towns.
- The initiative around *The Week* has its origin in the US and France. We started to cooperate with this group to support the translation into German language with this material (web site, dubbing of films, ...) . Breaking down the language barrier enables even more multiplication. We actively push *The Week* as a proposal into our networks.
- We plan to seek contact with local associations (Vereine) via our local supporters.

Your help to all these efforts and plans would be greatly appreciated.



Time Schedule

The exact timing of the measures to achieve the goals described above is difficult for the next years to come as we need some flexibility to react to our environment and in addition our own resources are limited. Such constraints out of our control are for example the resources of the city government for cooperation projects like the get-together, the time it takes until The Week films are

dubbed into German language or the further development in our relationship with the mayor and the city council determining if we need referendums or find agreements. However for the near future some milestones (but not exclusive) can be laid out:

Event	Date	Supports which goal or mitigates which risk
Get-Together "Energie und Wärme vor Ort produziert"	6.7.2023	Goal #1; Risk #2 - #3
Proposals in Citizens' assembly	End of July 2023	Goal #1 and #2; Risk #2
Founding meeting: support for neighbor town Geretsried P4F	11.7.2023	Goal #3
WOR4F Summer party	6.8.2023	Risk #1
Global Climate Strike: demonstration in Wolfratshausen	15.9.2023	Goal #1
Kidical Mass in Wolfratshausen for children's safety	Mid of Sept (date not officially communicated)	Goal #1
The Week as VHS offer	Semester starts in October	Goal #1 and #3
Get-Together "Mobility"	end of year - tbd	Goal #1; Risk #2 - #3; depends on outcome of first event
Referendum	tbd 2024	Goal #2; Depends on momentum from all measures above