

Town of Marbletown Climate Smart Planning

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Climate Smart Resiliency Planning Tool is a checklist to identify gaps in a community's planning process.

The Climate Smart Resiliency Planning Tool was used to evaluate opportunities for the Town of Marbletown to improve its community's resilience to flooding and climate change. The Planning Tool reviews many long- and short- term aspects of storm and climate change preparedness by reviewing Town and County planning documents, activities and management. Documents were reviewed, and municipal staff members were consulted in the process of completing the assessment. The assessment and recommendations have been shared through discussions at Town Board meetings.

Municipal staff engaged in the Town of Marbletown Climate Smart Planning assessment:

Dave Allen, Code Enforcement Officer
George Dimler, Highway Superintendent
Heather Moody, Town Clerk/Tax Collector
Rich Parete, Town Supervisor

The completed assessment and recommendations highlight areas of opportunity for the Town of Marbletown to integrate flood and climate change preparedness into its municipal operations and planning.

Areas of Strength

- The Town is a Climate Smart Community and has an active Environmental Conservation Commission. This body can be utilized to gain points in the Climate Smart Communities Program by completing actions as identified in the Climate Smart Communities Certification Action Checklist.

- Participate in The Nature Conservancy Community Resilience Building Workshop⁶, which helps community participants identify hazards, challenges, strengths, and priority actions for community resilience.
- Seek out training opportunities for municipal staff related to emergency management and floodplain issues.
- The Town of Marbletown can leverage completion of this Climate Smart Resiliency Planning Tool for points toward Climate Smart Communities certification. **CSC PE7 Action: Climate Smart Resiliency Planning (6 pts.)**. For more information on the Climate Smart Communities Program and the actions listed in this document, visit the Climate Smart Communities portal.⁷

Recommendations

The following opportunities emerged under each of the sections of the Climate Smart Planning assessment:

Section 2- Vulnerability and Risk Assessment

- Conduct a full vulnerability assessment detailing the magnitude of consequences associated with current and future climate hazards. **CSC PE7 Action: Climate Vulnerability Assessment (4-16 pts)**. Include how these events will effect internal operations, people, public health, the environment, the economy, and capital and operating costs. Consider using the Department of the State’s Asset Inventory Worksheet and Risk Assessment Tool⁸. Ensure that vulnerability and risk assessments are shared with all relevant municipal officials and emergency manager.
- Train municipal managers on the use of available risk (like FEMA’s HAZUS-MH) and vulnerability tools (like flood insurance rate maps and cumulative risk assessments). Use these to report estimated future financial losses from natural hazards.
- When updating the Town Comprehensive Plan, expand beyond mitigation strategies to include climate adaptation strategies. **CSC PE7Action: Climate Adaptation Strategies (2-8 pts)**.
 - Identify and categorize them by type, administration, condition, timing and geography.
 - Evaluate and prioritize adaptation strategies using metrics, such as strategy cost, feasibility, timing of implementation, efficacy and co-benefits.
 - Consider linking these strategies to capital budget cycles.

⁶ The Nature Conservancy Community Resilience Building Workshop (CRB): www.communityresiliencebuilding.com/crbworkshopguide

⁷ Climate Smart Communities Portal: <https://climatesmart.ny.gov/>

⁸ Department of the State’s Asset Inventory Worksheet and Risk Assessment Tool: <https://stormrecovery.ny.gov/community-regions/hudson-valley-and-westchester>

- Reference and incorporate components of any relevant plans (e.g. Natural Heritage Plan).
- Explain the support and involvement of emergency managers and public works officials.
- Explicitly mention and incorporate resilience within the plan’s mission, vision, and goals.
- Link recommendations to reducing hazard vulnerability through land-use planning.
- Emphasize non-structural pre-disaster mitigation measures, such as acquiring hazard-prone lands.
- Consider including strategies that determine whether to relocate structures that repeatedly flood, including identifying an equitable approach for community involvement in decision-making and potential funding sources.
- Ensure that the Town budgets include adequate funds for costs related to adapting infrastructure for resiliency. Incorporating adaptation consideration into an asset management or capital improvement plan is an ideal method to build resiliency into routine maintenance and upgrades. **CSC PE8 Action: Green Economic Development Plans (4 pts).**
- Consider creating a Flood Hazard Mitigation Plan to address potential future conditions:
 - Include a current Certified Floodplain Manager (CFM), municipal officials, community boards, businesses, and residents in the planning process.
 - Ensure that it lines up with National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) Community Rating System (CRS) standards. **CSC PE7: National Flood Insurance Program Community Rating System (3-9 pts.).** If adopted this will net Town points in the CRS that will in turn reduce NFIP flood insurance premiums Town-wide.
- Consider adopting the Association of Floodplain Managers No Adverse Impact concepts.¹³
- Consider creating a plan combining elements of a capital improvements plan and economic development plan. **CSC PE8 Action: Green Economic Development Plans (4 pts.). The plan could:**
 - Include a licensed professional planner and engineer in the planning process.
 - Consider the risk of storm damage when upgrading existing municipal infrastructure and on proposed infrastructure projects.
 - Incorporate projections of flooding from either riverine or stormwater sources into risk assessments over the expected service life of municipal infrastructure.
 - Incorporate existing plans, studies, reports and technical information.
 - Identify economic vulnerabilities due to hazards.

Section 6- Hazard Mitigation Implementation

- Consider adopting higher regulatory standards for floodplain administration and management such as:
 - Higher floodway standards based on less than the federally allowed 1-foot rise (e.g. floodways based on .5 feet or 0 feet rise standard) or prohibition of new development in floodways.
 - Cumulative substantial improvement over a defined set of years (5 or 10 years for example) and have building department track it.
 - Higher freeboard than NYS Mandated 2-feet for new and substantially improved/substantially damaged construction (e.g. 3 feet of freeboard).
- Consider adopting regulations that state that all road-stream crossings (e.g. bridges, culverts) must pass 1% Annual Chance (100-year storm) flow.
- Consider taking part in FEMA's Community Rating System¹⁷ **PE7 Action: National Flood Insurance Program Community Rating System (3-9 pts).**
- Propose retrofitting public infrastructure and critical facilities to withstand storm damage, and provide training in retrofitting hazard-prone residential buildings and NYSDEC Post Flood Stream Intervention training for appropriate staff.¹⁸
- Consider utilizing tools such as transfer/purchase of development rights, conservation overlay districts or cluster development, zoning for open or recreational space, protective buffer ordinances, rolling easement, or buyouts of vulnerable properties to manage development in hazard prone areas.
- Support land-acquisition programs to purchase land conservation easements in hazard-prone areas. **CSC PE7 Action: Restoration of Floodplains and Riparian Buffers (2 pts).**
- Engage in shoreline, wetland, or riparian buffer restoration and protection by **CSC PE7 Actions: Restoration of Floodplains and Riparian Buffers (1-10 pts) or PE7 Action: Nature-based Shoreline Protection (under review).**
 - Encouraging sustainable enhanced methods of protection encouraged through incentives or regulation.
 - Establishing special area ordinances for habitat preservation.
 - Implementing impact fees to pay for restoration and protection efforts.
 - Developing a plan to control invasive species.
- Consider using grant programs such as the FEMA Hazard Mitigation Grant Program, FEMA pre-disaster Mitigation Grant Program, and FEMA Flood Mitigation Assistance Program to implement mitigation projects.

¹⁷ FEMA's Community Rating System is a voluntary incentive program that encourages community floodplain management that exceeds the minimum National Flood Insurance requirements. <https://fema.gov/national-flood-insurance-program-community-rating-system>