

Hastings-on-Hastings Climate Smart Community Task Force
Public Engagement & Education Achievements Report

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Produced by the
**Hastings-on-Hudson Climate Smart Communities Task Force
Public Engagement & Education Team**

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Table of Contents

Educate	2
Engage	4
Engineer	7
Emergency	10
Enact	14
Evaluate	16

Educate

Climate Action Webpages and Social Media

Planned	Achieved
The CSC TF, in collaboration with the Conservation Commission and other Village Boards and Commissions, will update a Village webpage aimed at educating residents about climate change adaptation and mitigation. The website includes various links: to important Village documents and policies focused on sustainability (such as our Green Building Code and energy reduction programs); to action-oriented resources; and to partner websites. There are links to other resources including a library of webinars and a list of film, TV, and video resources. This site will be updated regularly. In addition, social media will be used to promote sustainability-related initiatives.	Webpages on the Village website were developed and social media content was boosted to inform and involve residents on how to support a green and sustainable environment. This included announcements related to energy initiatives (e.g. GridRewards™ and Community Solar), food waste reduction (e.g. the Village food scrap program and pilot food waste curbside pick up program), and conservation (e.g. the tree planting at Hillside Woods and Boutillier's Brook). The Village also promoted specific events aimed at involving residents in local clean-up efforts (e.g. Village Clean-Up and Riversweep) as well as a Repair Café, which encourages reuse and waste reduction.

Climate Action Events and Webinars for the Public

Planned	Achieved
The Village of Hastings-on-Hudson celebrates Earth Day each year with events and lectures (in 2020 the events were virtual due to the pandemic). Events and lectures are planned for 2021, and where relevant, will be adapted to COVID-19. Details will be provided to the public in the early spring. Marketing typically includes a website and Village-wide emails.	Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the Village celebrated Earth Month with webinars focused on understanding climate change, and providing education on our local natural resources. The Zoom-a-Palooza! Earth Month 2021 presentations were 45-minute online events that included a teach-in on GridRewards™ and Community Solar, an overview of EnergySmart Home solutions, and

	<p>a deep dive into green concrete. A new addition in 2021 was a series of events in May related to water. The webinars were well received and will be a useful tool for ongoing public education.</p>
<h2>Climate Change Awareness Workshops for Village Employees</h2>	
Planned	Achieved
<p>The Village of Hastings-on-Hudson aims to work with Village staff and the public to increase education around climate change. This includes reaching out to Village departments and department heads to provide background and context on climate change, as well as brainstorming ways to mitigate our Village's impact and to help the Village adapt to the extreme climate events that it will likely encounter in the decades to come.</p>	<p>In August 2020, the CSC Task Force engaged the Hastings Emergency Services, team, in discussions about improving emergency preparedness. Participants recommended adaptation measures the Village might take and these were incorporated in to a workshop held in September.</p>
<h2>Natural Resources Inventory</h2>	
Planned	Achieved
<p>In 2020, the Village produced a <i>Natural Resources Inventory (NRI)</i> of the natural resources existing in the Village of Hastings-on-Hudson. An NRI inventories the natural resources of an area, both physical and biological, and provides an educational foundation for municipal land-use and conservation planning. In 2021, the Village plans to review the NRI to assess whether it requires updating.</p>	<p>In June 2021, the Board of Trustees adopted the updated NRI, which is a comprehensive inventory of the natural resources existing in the Village of Hastings-on-Hudson and serves as a tool for future plans, local laws or overlay zones. As a result of recommendations in the 2020 inventory, in February 2021, the Village chose to dedicate over 112 acres of parkland in perpetuity (see HERE), bringing the total dedicated open space in the Village to 156 acres.</p>

Organics Management Plan	
Planned	Achieved
In 2020/2021, the Village intends to produce an <i>Organics Management Plan</i> to help document current systems, educate the public, and propose new strategies.	In June 2021, the Village finalized an <i>Organics Management Plan</i> that was adopted by the Board of Trustees on June 15, 2021.
Engage	
Community Solar and Other Community Campaigns	
Planned	Achieved
During 2019/2020, the Village of Hastings-on-Hudson introduced residents to Community Solar via a campaign organized by Sustainable Westchester. The program supports expansion of solar energy capacity by enabling a local resident or business to subscribe to a portion of the electricity produced by a nearby solar installation. This installation generates and delivers electricity into the local electric grid, producing bill credits which are distributed to subscribers. Each month, subscribers receive credits on their electric bills, reducing their electricity charges as bills are discounted to the value of the credits. Even for those whose homes are not suitable for solar, community solar enables residents to benefit financially while supporting the reduction of GHGs. The Village intends to expand the program in the 2020/2021 period to attract more residents to sign on.	The Village reintroduced Community Solar to the community during Earth Month 2021, and launched three additional community campaigns: EnergySmart Home, EVs and GridRewards™. The Campaigns were developed in cooperation with Sustainable Westchester. A webpage was set up (see HERE) which provided links to flyers and promotional zoom events. Flyers were also distributed at a Mini Eco Fair held at the Farmer's Market. E-blast messages were sent to the community promoting the campaigns and information about the campaigns was shared via an article in the local newspaper. Results to date: As of April 30th 2021, 113 people had signed up for GridRewards™ and as of May 15th 2021, 29 homeowners had signed up for Community Solar.

Pollinator Pathways

Planned

Under the auspices of the Conservation Commission, the Village launched a pollinator pathway campaign to educate the public about the importance of butterflies and bees and to encourage the resurgence of these insects in the Village. The initiative promoted the cultivation of vegetable gardens and fruit trees. In 2020/21 the Village plans to expand the program by promoting the “Adopt-a-Spot” initiative.

Achieved

During 2020/2021, the Pollinator Pathways team created a webpage (see [HERE](#)) that includes a map of participating gardens and a calendar of local events. The webpage also documents ongoing activities including the newly launched “Adopt-a-Spot” initiative.

Bioblitz

Planned

In April of 2020, the Village held a Hastings-on-Hudson [Bioblitz](#) in National Geographic’s free iNaturalist app. The Bioblitz was a meaningful and enjoyable way to celebrate Earth Month in Hastings-on-Hudson. Residents were invited to take pictures on their smartphones of living things they find in their yards or our woods and public spaces, and the iNaturalist app automatically logged each discovery, with its location, in the Bioblitz. In 2021, the Village plans to launch a second Bioblitz during Earth Month.

Achieved

The second Hastings-on-Hudson Bioblitz took place from April 1 to April 30, 2021. At the end of the month, the Village had a snapshot of what people observed in their gardens and in our woods. In total, 636 observations were made, comprising 295 different species; in the process, residents learned about our local ecology. One of the Earth Day webinars that took place on April 6, 2021 explained the Bioblitz, see [HERE](#).

Village Staff Engagement

Planned

The CSC TF plans to continue engaging members of the Village emergency response cohort to better understand their critical role in climate emergencies. Staff expertise will be solicited on various initiatives including updating the green building code. Staff will also be engaged in recycling efforts within the Village including initiating food scrap recycling within Village offices. The team will work with Village staff to document energy reduction efforts and other CSC actions.

Achieved

The CSC TF met with members of the Village Emergency Management team to solicit their input for Emergency Preparedness planning. The team sought input from the Building Inspector on energy savings measures for Village buildings. The CSC TF engaged Village staff in its efforts to document energy reduction efforts such as switching decorative lights to LEDs, HVAC upgrades, purchasing all electric vehicles, improving bike parking, and energy benchmarking for government buildings etc.

Lawn Care Campaign

Planned

The Village already has a summer leaf-blower ban and issues annual reminders. Under the auspices of the Conservation Commission, efforts will be made to harmonize approaches among neighboring villages to ensure a more coordinated and unified approach to enforcement and to engage the public and landscapers in developing more climate friendly approaches to lawn care. The group also plans to review the Village leaf blower law to determine if it should be amended.

Achieved

The Conservation Commission updated the [lawncare information](#) section on the Village website, and is working with the environmental commissions of neighboring Rivertowns on a healthy landscape initiative. The impact of gas-powered lawn machinery on climate change will be part of an upcoming campaign to reduce usage in Westchester County.

Engineer

Electric Vehicles

Planned

In 2020/21, the Village of Hastings-on-Hudson plans to create a Green Fleet Team, which would update the fleet inventory, address potential fleet rightsizing of the Village fleet, and recommend the purchase of new electric vehicles (EVs). The Village will celebrate National Drive Electric Week by promoting its EV charging stations, showcasing new EVs that are part of the municipal fleet, and by launching an EV campaign to encourage residents to purchase EVs by exposing them to EV manufacturers and owners. The PEET will inform the public about these events.

Achieved

The Village's National Drive Electric Day took place on April 17, 2021. The event was promoted on the Village website and through promotional e-blasts. The Village took an active role in promoting the event, with a focus on showcasing recently purchased EVs that were one of the focal points of the event. On April 20, the Village hosted a webinar titled "All the Miles Without the Cost: The Dos and Don'ts of Buying an Electric Car", (see [HERE](#)). In 2020 and 2021, in a continued effort to electrifying the Village fleet, the Village purchased two fully electric vehicles.

Master Bike Plan and Bike Parking

Planned

The Village of Hastings-on-Hudson will develop a Master Bike Plan in 2020/21. The Village will also investigate the possibility of adding bike lanes in select locations and bike parking infrastructure.

Achieved

In 2020/2021, the Village developed a Master Bike Plan that includes recommendations on bike parking and bike sharing, both of which the Village is actively exploring. The *Bicycling and Walking Infrastructure Master Plan* on June 15, 2020.

Hillside Woods Restoration Project

Planned

The Village has prioritized focus on our local hundred-acre woods and the threat that climate change and human neglect poses to its ecosystem. A sub-committee made up of

Achieved

Multiple work sessions devoted to the restoration of Hillside Woods were held in 2020 and 2021. These efforts were documented in a dedicated webpage (see

members of Village Boards and Commissions, including Parks and Recreation, the Conservation and the CSC TF, is working to heighten awareness of the importance of this ecosystem. The sub-committee plans to define steps and take action to restore the health of the woods and aid in its long-term protection.	HERE) and included an initiative to engage students at the schools. A wooden information kiosk for the woods' main entrance was installed to help update residents about the woods ecosystem, threats to the woods (including climate change), the woods' restoration project, and how visitors can help the woods and become better stewards of our local environment.
Arbor Day	
Planned	Achieved
Each year the Village celebrates Arbor Day, the annual observance of the importance of trees in our lives. First observed in Nebraska in 1872, it is a day when people around the world plant trees and celebrate environmental stewardship. Our Village was recognized as a Tree City USA Community by the National Arbor Day Foundation 35 years ago. The Village plans to continue this tradition during the upcoming year and plant trees for Arbor Day in 2021.	The Village proclaimed April 30, 2021 as Arbor Day and the Recreation Department team planted three trees in Draper Park. The trees were part of our holiday celebration in December. In addition, a Lilac Ivory Silk tree (funded under the NYS Urban Forestry Council Tree City USA Reward Grant Program) was planted at Fulton Park in front of the Library.
Benchmarking & Community GHG Inventory	
Planned	Achieved
The Village will produce a 2020 Energy Benchmarking Report and will update its <i>Community Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Inventory</i> in preparation for completing the <i>Climate Action Plan</i> .	The Village produced a 2020 Energy Benchmarking Report and provides annual benchmarking reports as required under the law. The Village also completed the "Advanced Benchmarking" requirement as part of the NYSEDA Clean Energy Communities program. In addition, the Village also produced a <i>Community Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Inventory</i> , which was adopted by the Board of Trustees on June 15, 2020.

Climate Action Plan

Planned

During the upcoming 18 months, the Village will develop a climate action plan to delineate the next steps in reducing GHG emissions and building resiliency. The plan will be a strategy document that sets goals, defines GHG reduction targets, and identifies priority actions. It will require substantial community engagement. As part of this effort, the Team will review the Village's greenhouse gas inventory and energy benchmarking reports and goals. The PEET will play a role in informing the public about the goals and progress of the *Climate Action Plan*.

Achieved

Due to Covid-19, the Climate Action Planning Institute (CAPI) program was postponed and work is expected to begin in 2021/2022. However, in anticipation, the Village updated its *Community Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Inventory*, which is a critical step in preparing for a *Climate Action Plan*.

Emergency

Emergency Preparedness Workshop

Planned

In late September 2020, the Village plans to hold a "Post Tropical Storm Community Workshop" to address emergency preparedness focused on improving resiliency for individuals, families and neighborhoods in the context of extreme weather events. The work will be carried out by a subgroup of the CSC TF. During the event, the presenters will provide an overview of the emergency preparedness information page that is available on the Village government's website.

Achieved

On September 29, 2020, the Village hosted a "Post Tropical Storm Community Workshop" to address emergency preparedness. During the event, the presenters provided an overview of the emergency preparedness information page that is available on the Village government's website (see [HERE](#)). The page was developed in coordination with the Village Emergency Management team. Website links related to the event can be found [HERE](#), a video of the event can be found [HERE](#), and promotion for the event can be found [HERE](#) and [HERE](#).

Climate Adaptation Plan

Planned	Achieved
Building on the <i>Climate Vulnerability Assessment</i> undertaken in June 2020 and the Emergency Preparedness Workshop that will take place in September 2020, the Village of Hastings-on-Hudson plans to create a <i>Climate Adaptation Plan</i> that addresses emergency preparedness. The <i>Climate Adaptation Plan</i> will be developed based on input from the public as well as Village staff, our front-line emergency responders and relevant boards and commissions. The process will include public workshops and the output will be a community resiliency vision. The work will be carried out by a subgroup of the CSC TF.	The Village of Hastings-on-Hudson created a climate adaptation and resilience vision using an inclusive public engagement process. After taking into consideration a broad range of input, the following overarching community Vision statement was crafted: “We are committed to addressing climate adaptation and leaving no one behind.”

Hazard Mitigation Plan

Planned	Achieved
During 2020 to 2022, the Village of Hastings-on-Hudson will participate in a County-led process to update the <i>Hazard Mitigation Plan</i> . A key element of the effort will be to ensure that the new plan adequately takes into consideration the effects of climate change.	Due to Covid-19, the County-led <i>Hazard Mitigation Plan</i> update was postponed and work is expected to begin in 2021/2022.

Climate Smart Resiliency Planning

Planned	Achieved
During 2020 to 2021, the Village of Hastings-on-Hudson will undertake a Climate	In 2020 to 2021, the Village of Hastings-on-Hudson undertook a Climate

<p>Smart Resiliency Planning (CSRP) exercise. A CSRP exercise enables municipalities to better assess the resiliency of their communities to the extreme weather associated with climate change. The process helps local decision makers examine vulnerabilities and take action to protect community assets. By conducting a CSRP evaluation, gaps and vulnerabilities are exposed, enabling municipalities to identify possible modifications to better prepare for climate change. The work will be carried out by a subgroup of volunteers with relevant expertise.</p>	<p>Smart Resiliency Planning (CSRP) exercise. The CSRP evaluation identified several gaps and vulnerabilities, and resulted in a comprehensive report that outlines recommendations for multiple future planning efforts. The <i>Climate Smart Resiliency Planning Report</i> was adopted by the Board of Trustees on June 15, 2020.</p>
<h2>Equity</h2>	
<h3>Safe Routes to School</h3>	
Planned	Achieved
<p>The Village of Hastings-on-Hudson traces the origins of its Safe Routes to School program to November 2014, when it adopted the <i>Complete Streets Policy</i> and began putting in place its recommendations for safer streets. The Hastings Safe Routes to School (SRTS) Committee is comprised of a cross section of community leaders including Village officials, school administrators, PTSA members, and interested residents committed to building on prior accomplishments and to making further improvements. SRTS Committee members work closely with the school district and the Village to ensure that key elements of a SRTS program are in place. Their goal is to make the Village safer and more accessible to students from all neighborhoods, including those that have traditionally had fewer safe</p>	<p>During 2020/2021, the Village updated <i>Appendix A - Complete Streets</i>, our Complete Streets Policy reporting tool, which documents traffic calming measures and other traffic safety improvements. The tool serves as a guide for various committees in setting agendas and planning for change (the committees include the Safe Routes to School Committee and the Hastings PTSA Safety Committee). The list helps the Village assess performance with respect to the Complete Streets Policy on a regular basis. This document can be found on the Hastings-on-Hudson Village Web site in the Safe Routes to School section.</p>

<p>routes. The Safe Routes to School Committee meets regularly and has a web presence for educational purposes in partnership with the Village. The current plan is to initiate pedestrian and bike-friendly changes and traffic-calming measures that would benefit students walking and biking to school, as well as pedestrians in general.</p>	
<h2>Senior Outreach Program</h2>	
<p>Planned</p>	<p>Achieved</p>
<p>The Village has a Senior Outreach program and Senior Council that offer resources, support, and advocacy to Hasting's villagers 62 and over. The CSC TF works with the Senior Council to ensure that climate change efforts take into consideration the needs of seniors and that seniors are made aware of initiatives that may be relevant to them. Material designed to inform seniors about how climate change might affect them and how they might better prepare for severe weather events such as heat emergencies will be developed.</p>	<p>The CSC TF engaged seniors in Village emergency preparedness efforts with a focus on encouraging them to sign up for the Village's "Are You OK" program. Seniors were actively engaged in the GridRewards™ and Community Solar energy reduction campaigns, with a special emphasis on the cost-saving components of these programs. Seniors were also engaged on the Pollinator Pathways initiative, as many of them are master gardeners.</p>
<h2>Youth Outreach</h2>	
<p>Planned</p>	<p>Achieved</p>
<p>The CSC TF plans to engage and enlist youth and incorporate their perspectives and feedback into educational and outreach resources and materials. In addition, the Village has a Youth Advocate Program that, in coordination with the Village Youth Council, organizes a wide range of services including educational and prevention programs in the schools and the community, after-school recreational activities, homework help, counseling, computer access at the</p>	<p>The Conservation Commission continued to encourage youth input and representation on the Commission. Work sessions devoted to the restoration of Hillside Woods included an initiative to engage High School and Elementary School students in tree planting events (see HERE). The Village Vine Squad, a group seeking to preserve the health of Village trees by removing invasive vines, continued its program with the Hastings High School allowing students to receive school</p>

Community Center, Safe Rides, Help-a-Child, and the Hastings Food Pantry. The CSC TF will work with YAP to engage and educate vulnerable youth about climate change impacts and mitigation strategies.	credit for their work with the Vine Squad. Youth organizations, such as the Hastings High School Environmental Club and the Girl Scouts were engaged on various projects.
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Enact

Community Choice Aggregation (CCA)

Planned	Achieved
The Village of Hastings-on-Hudson plans to reconfirm its commitment to Community Choice Aggregation (CCA) with a 100% renewable default supply for residents.	CCA is a municipal energy procurement model that replaces the utility as the default supplier of electricity and ensures that a greater percentage of electricity is coming from renewable sources. In October 2015, Hastings-on-Hudson passed a CCA Participation Resolution and a CCA Local Law and Resolution . In September 2020, the Village reconfirmed its commitment to the CCA via resolution .

Fleet Efficiency Policy

Planned	Achieved
The Village of Hastings-on-Hudson plans to adopt a <i>Fleet Efficiency Policy</i> to improve fleet efficiency and provide guidance on fleet rightsizing.	On March 16 th 2021, the Village adopted a Fleet Efficiency and Rightsizing Policy , with the goal of fully electrifying the Village fleet by 2035.

Green Parking Lot Standards

Planned	Achieved
The Village of Hastings-on-Hudson plans to adopt green parking lot standards.	The Village is undertaking research on green parking lot standards for consideration by the Board of Trustees.
Green Building Code	
Planned	Achieved
The Village of Hastings' Green Building Code was adopted in 2013, the first such code in Westchester County. The Green Building Code ensures that new construction - and significant additions or renovations to existing buildings - will be done in accordance with rigorous standards of energy efficiency and environmental sustainability. The Village plans to update its Green Building Code and incorporate into it other relevant policies passed by the Village since the code was originally adopted. There is a sub-committee of the Conservation Commission that is dedicated to this work.	The Green Building Code Sub-Committee of the Village Conservation Commission has made recommendations on new building standards, and these efforts will be taken up by the Board of Trustees in the coming year.
Green Power Procurement	
Planned	Achieved
The Village of Hastings-on-Hudson plans to investigate creating a green power procurement policy that would mandate switching to 100% renewable energy for municipal buildings.	The Village is undertaking research on making the switch to 100% renewable energy for municipal buildings.
Innovative Actions	
Planned	Achieved

<p>The Village plans to identify innovative ways to lower its carbon footprint and reduce GHG emissions so as to mitigate climate change and/or build resiliency to better adapt to climate change.</p>	<p>In December of 2020, the Village launched “Destination Hastings Downtown Dollars,” an initiative to create a form of local currency designed to strengthen the resiliency of the downtown (see HERE). In February 2021, the Village dedicated over 112 acres of parkland in perpetuity (see HERE), bringing the total of dedicated open space in the Village to 156 acres. The Task Force had hoped to partner with Waze carpool to reduce vehicle use, but due to the covid-19 pandemic these efforts have been postponed.</p>
<h2>Evaluate</h2>	
<h3>Annual Review</h3>	
Planned	Achieved
<p>The Village plans to use the CSC framework to document action steps and achievements. In 2020, the Village was awarded both Bronze (March 2020) and Silver CSC certification (September 2020). While no Gold tier has been announced, the Village intends to document as many additional new actions as possible in the coming years. The Village will also review expiring actions in an effort to ensure its status stays current. The Mayor and Board of Trustees plan to undertake an annual review of actions achieved to date. This annual review will include a review of strategies, goals, and accomplishments. Plans will be reviewed against achievements and existing plans will be updated if needed. The review will also be a celebration of effort and achievements.</p>	<p>After receiving Silver CSC certification in September 2020, the Village made a decision to continue pursuing CSC advancement. The focus during this past year has been on updating expiring actions and identifying new actions that are of strategic interest to the community and Board of Trustees.</p> <p>The Village prepared a <i>Climate Smart Communities Annual Progress Report 2020</i> that documents plans vs. achievements from January to December 2020 using the CSC framework.</p>