



**Climate Smart Canandaigua Task Force
Annual Progress Report**

2023



**Climate Smart
Communities**
Certified Bronze

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Climate Smart Communities: An Introduction

Climate Smart Communities is a New York State program that helps local governments take action to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and adapt to a changing climate. In doing so, Climate Smart Communities can advance community goals for health & safety, economic vitality, energy independence, and quality of life. The program has two designations—registered and certified. On April 23, 2019, the City of Canandaigua became the 23rd Climate Smart Certified Community when it received its Bronze designation and the first to enter the program certified.

Climate Smart Canandaigua Task Force

In addition to the work required to earn Climate Smart Community Certification, the Climate Smart Canandaigua (CSC) Task Force was formed to actively educate and engage the public with critical information and vital opportunities to mitigate climate change. CSC is comprised of community stakeholders, including two City Councilmembers, Staff, and citizens representing a variety of backgrounds and community organizations, and is committed to collaborating with City Council to accomplish plans, facilitate programs, and offer activities and events that align with the Climate Smart Communities Certification Program.

Members

Chair: Thomas Lyon
Coordinator: John Goodwin
Coordinator: Shawna Bonshak
Maria Bucci
Erich Dittmar
Lauren Dittmar
Chris Glattly
Nathan Henry
Ellen Polimeni
Dave Poteet
Karen White
Ryan Wilmer

Our Mission

- Provide ongoing implementation of actions related to climate change and increase efforts to reduce our carbon footprint and achieve cost savings in the process.
- Assess baseline conditions, establish goals and develop plans and suggest policies to achieve goals.
- Educate the community and stakeholders on the value of the goals and plans.

A Look Back

Climate Smart Canandaigua was awarded NYS DEC grants to help fund Government Operations and Community Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Inventories, a Natural Resources Inventory, and a Climate Vulnerability Assessment. Each have been completed and are aiding in the guidance of the Task Force as we move forward. Covid truly took a toll on the Task Force and its ability to get things accomplished in 2020 and 2021 but we have recovered nicely and 2023 was a year of accomplishments including four new Zero Emission Vehicle, all-solar charger installations, a waste reduction program, start of the water resource recovery facility ATAD project, and launching of the Clean heating and cooling community campaign

CSC Mission #1

Provide ongoing implementation of actions related to climate change and increase efforts to reduce our carbon footprint and achieve cost savings in the process.

Accomplishments by Action: BUILD A CLIMATE SMART COMMUNITY, DECREASE ENERGY USE, INNOVATION, SHIFT TO CLEAN RENEWABLE ENERGY, INFORM AND INSPIRE THE PUBLIC, PERFORMANCE

Action Item: Composting Program

- **Results:** *Completed/In Progress.* The City held an educational session, in partnership with Ontario County, to provide detailed information on starting an at-home composting system. Once residents completed the program, City DPW Staff delivered their FREE compost kit (purchased by the City).
- **Challenges:** Making sure the public is aware of the program, managing requests, and organizing delivery. We recognize the importance that participants are educated on the process of composting. To make sure the program was successful, CSC partnered with the Cornell Cooperative Extension of Ontario County and Wood Library to hold the “Composting 101” workshop.
- **Next Steps:** The City has 26 bins remaining and, in the Spring of 2024, will continue work on community education and engagement around composting.

Action Item: Waste Reduction Program

- **Results:** *Completed.* In the beginning of the year, the City changed its solid waste collection program. Goals included, mitigation of short & long-term injury of employees; elimination and replacement of solid waste collection fee with a new fee based on amount of waste; reduction of overall amount of garbage/waste and improved community appearance. All single-family dwellings and two to four-family dwellings were issued a 64-gallon garbage toter and a 96 or 64-gallon recycling toter per dwelling. The utilization of garbage toters beyond the first toter involves a quarterly fee (\$37.50 per quarter, \$150 annually). Tax-exempt properties that elected to have the City collect their garbage are charged from the first toter. All recycling toters are free. No garbage outside of a toter is collected.
- **Challenges:** The biggest challenge was education and getting the residents through the change from their personal “toters” and receptacles to those provided and designated by the City. Many not only did not want to give up their current trash cans but thought there would never be enough room in the new ones.
- **Next Steps:** Next steps involve, since it has now been a year, analyzing data to realize reductions and continue the education programs with our residents advocating recycling and waste management.

Action Item: EV Charging Stations

- **Results:** Completed. The City received a grant from NYS to fund the purchase of four (4) zero emission vehicle charging stations. The units were received, from BEAM solar, in October and placed in 4 municipal parking lots around the City. The units do not need any points of connection and are completely solar and off-grid. Each Level 2 unit can charge two vehicles.
- **Challenges:** The public backlash we received when placing these chargers was unprecedented and truly unexpected. They are large and a bit “futuristic” looking. We placed one next to City Hall and moved it within days due to public outcry on the optics. We moved a second charger to a different lot after getting some business complaints. We monitor the usage and have been pleased with the utilization as well as the positive feedback now that residents and visitors know their purpose.
- **Next Steps:** Monitor usage and move the chargers, if applicable. Additionally, provide education on EV charging. Explore a Level 3 charger and grant opportunities.

Action Item: Water Resource Recovery Facility (WRRF) ATAD Project

- **Results:** In Progress. Autothermal thermophilic aerobic digestion (ATAD) is a microbial fermentation process characterized as a tertiary treatment of waste material carried out in jacketed reactors. ATAD (autothermal aerobic thermophilic digestion) is a liquid composting, tertiary sludge treatment process which utilizes the metabolic heat generated by way of microbial digestion to stabilize the treated sludge and effectively pasteurize the digestate. Work is well underway on the \$28 million project to switch waste production from Class B to Class A biosolids that can be used as landfill cover. The Leachate will be effectively processed locally reducing hauling to other areas of the county and country. The WRRF will no longer flair off methane gas and the revenue from the leachate treatment and disposal savings will pay for the entire project.
- **Challenges:** Challenges include multi-million-dollar construction on-site at a functioning facility that is fully operational. The site is fairly compact and normal operations cannot be disturbed. The City coped with a 500-year flood in July 2023 with the WRRF essentially flooding and construction being temporarily halted.
- **Next Steps:** Continue construction with completion targeted for end of 2024.

CSC Mission #2

Assess baseline conditions, establish goals and develop plans and suggest policies to achieve goals.

Accomplishments by Action: BUILD A CLIMATE SMART COMMUNITY, DECREASE ENERGY USE, INNOVATION, SHIFT TO CLEAN RENEWABLE ENERGY, ENGAGE IN AN EVOLVING PROCESS OF CLIMATE ACTION

Action Item: Community Choice Aggregation

- **Results:** Completed. In May 2023, the City executed a CCA supply contract with Gateway Community Power, for a 24-month fixed rate of \$0.07485 per kWh. Residents will begin to receive energy from 100% renewable sources September 1, 2023.
- **Challenges:** This is the second time the City has tried a Community Choice Aggregation program. Some residents are sensitive to the issues with the first program. Additionally, it is an “OPT-OUT” program, meaning that residents will need to actively remove themselves should they choose not to participate. The community outreach and information campaign may also pose challenges, but the 3rd Party Administrator the City chooses will help with alleviating those concerns.
- **Next Steps:** Support the 3rd Party administrator to educate residents about Community Choice Aggregation.

CSC Mission #3

Educate the community and stakeholders on the value of the goals and plans.

Accomplishments by Action: BUILD A CLIMATE SMART COMMUNITY, DECREASE ENERGY USE, INNOVATION, SHIFT TO CLEAN RENEWABLE ENERGY, INFORM AND INSPIRE THE PUBLIC, PERFORMANCE

Action Item: Community Campaign – Clean Heating and Cooling

- **Results:** In-Progress NYSERDA. The City of Canandaigua worked with Genesee Fingerlakes Regional Planning Council (and Climate Solutions Accelerator) to start a NYSERDA Clean Heating and Cooling campaign in August 2023. At a public education event in November 2023, residents, in attendance at the Wood Library, were taught the benefits of energy efficiency homes and how to accomplish changes to achieve such efficiencies. Audits were discussed and ultimately, contractors were on hand discussing upgrades and improvements to homes.
- **Challenges:** The challenge is how best to get word out about these programs. We wanted to target areas of the City that were flooded but ultimately, due to timing and most residents already getting replacements, this did not work out. Part of the grant is related to outreach and advertising and we are working through best practices now.
- **Next Steps:** The \$20,000 grant includes funds for advertising and outreach and we are finalizing that step. Additionally, getting residents signed up for the audits is key.

Action Item: Solid Waste Reduction Mailer

- **Results:** Completed. Using funds from Ontario County, the City purchased refrigerator magnets and mailed them out to every household in the City. In addition to the magnets, residents received a pamphlet of information about how to use the Town Transfer Station and what can or cannot be recycled there.
- **Challenges:** This has been a very successful program that we have continued from 2020. Magnets are part of the New Home Owner Packets the City provides and are also available in City Hall and at DPW.
- **Next Steps:** Distribute remaining magnets and order more if necessary.

Action Item: Facebook Page

- **Results:** Completed/In Progress. A Facebook page for Climate Smart Canandaigua was created to be a place to educate the community and stakeholders on the value of the goals and plans, share environmental information, and promote local green events. As of today, the page has 534 followers with one post with a reach of 71,000 people, almost 11,000 engagements, and 787 shares.
- **Challenges:** Keeping the Facebook page active through volunteer time.
- **Next Steps:** Create a social media calendar to plan out seasonal posts and fill in with more timely posts as needed.

Action Item: Webpage

- **Results:** *Completed/In Progress.* A webpage for Climate Smart Canandaigua was created on the City's Official website to be a place for information about meetings and meeting minutes and general Task Force information. As well as keep the public updated.
- **Challenges:** Keeping the webpage updated through volunteer time.
- **Next Steps:** Plot out a more cohesive way of keeping it more up to date.

Looking Ahead to 2024

Grants Studies

The Climate Smart Canandaigua Task Force continues to explore grant opportunities. We are currently looking into grant funding that will be available from the Clean Energy Community Program due to our opting into the Community Choice Aggregation plan. If funds are received, we will use them for HVAC upgrades to our Police Department.

2024 Planned Action Items

CSC Task Force Member Recruitment Plan: The Task Force must develop a plan to recruit new members. In addition, having a recruitment plan in place will help identify individuals to fill CSC vacancies expeditiously should any sitting member need to resign prior to the end of their 3-year term. The goal is to have a full Task Force of 12 members, including the Chair as one of eleven (11) appointed members and a member of City Staff as the CSC Coordinator.

Tentative Completion Date: Summer 2024

Community Campaign – Clean Heating and Cooling: Continue to roll out our campaign and hit benchmarks with energy audits and equipment replacement. Explore grant opportunities for equipment post audit.

Tentative Completion Date: Winter 2025

Electric and Fuel-Efficient Vehicles in City Fleet- The City is scheduled to receive six (6) Ford Lightnings - fully electric vehicles. City already has hybrid vehicles for all Police Patrol vehicles, nearly all un-marked Police vehicles and Fire Chief response vehicle. Continue to explore for larger vehicles, but the marketplace is still young, expensive and would challenge our service/safety operations

Tentative Completion Date: Rolling

Water Resource Recovery Facility (WRRF) ATAD Project- Complete the project in 2024, eliminate methane gas burn-off and make the switch to Class A biosolids and leachate acceptance.

Tentative Completion Date: 2024

Composting in Municipal Facilities: Work w/ Impact Earth to implement Waste Reduction Strategies in Municipal Buildings, including on-site composting

Tentative Completion Date: Early 2024