NEW YORK STATE OF OPPORTUNITY. | **Climate Smart Communities**

CSC PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The Climate Smart Communities (CSC) program is a New York State initiative to help local communities reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, prepare for impacts of climate change and save taxpayer dollars. The program is designed to address 10 focus areas outlined in the CSC 10 Pledge Elements (see below).

This CSC profile outlines the City of Albany's progress through the 10 pledge elements. Detailed information on actions completed, in progress, and identified for future action is provided in the tables on the following pages. If a table is missing for a particular pledge element, it means that the CSC program does not have a record of actions taken to address that pledge element.

The CSC Certification program provides local governments with a comprehensive framework to guide climate action and enables high performing communities to achieve recognition for their leadership. Each pledge element below is accompanied by a CSC Certification Manual that recommends initiatives and resources for getting started. Click on any of the pledge elements for additional information.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT FACTS:

Adopted Climate Smart Communities (CSC) Pledge: 2009

CSC Pledge Elements Addressed: 10 out of 10

Total Actions Completed: 31

Government Type: City

County: Albany County

Region: Capital District

Population: 97,856

Climate Smart Communities Pledge Elements *[Click links to view CSC Certification Manual]*

1. **Pledge to be a Climate Smart Community**

2. **Set Goals, Inventory Emissions, Plan for Climate Action**

3. **Decrease Community Energy Use**

4. **Increase Community Use of Renewable Energy**

5. **Realize Benefits of Recycling and Other Climate-Smart Solid Waste Management Practices**

6. **Reduce Greenhouse Gas Emissions Through Use of Climate-Smart Land-Use Tools**

7. **Enhance Community Resilience and Prepare for the Effects of Climate Change**

8. **Support Development of a Green Innovation Economy**

9. **Inform and Inspire the Public**

10. **Commit to an Evolving Process of Climate Action**

Pledge Element 1: Pledge to be a Climate Smart Community

Action	Status	Description
Adopted CSC Pledge	Completed	The City of Albany passed the CSC pledge in spring 2009.
Sustainability Advisory Committee	Completed	In the spring of 2013 the City of Albany passed a local law to establish a Sustainability Advisory Committee (SAC). The Committee is led by the City's Sustainability Planner and includes City department heads, Mayoral and Common Council appointees. The SAC members lead five sub-committees including community outreach, built environment, urban agriculture, energy, transportation, and water. The SAC submits annual reports to the Common Council in June.

Pledge Element 2: Set Goals, Inventory Emissions, Plan for Climate Action

Action	Status	Description
Community GHG Inventory	Completed	In 2010, Albany created a GHG inventory for the baseline year 2009. It included both government and community GHG emissions. In 2013, the City is updating its government inventory for 2010, 2011, and 2012. For the community inventory, it the City will utilize results of the Regional Greenhouse Gas Inventory (2010 baseline).
Community Climate Action Plan	Completed	A Climate Action Plan was created and included in Albany's Comprehensive Plan and was adopted by the Albany Common Council in 2012.
Government GHG Inventory	Completed	In 2010, Albany created a GHG inventory for the baseline year 2009. It included both government and community GHG emissions. In 2013, the City is updating its government inventory for 2010, 2011, and 2012. For the community inventory, it the City will utilize results of the Regional Greenhouse Gas Inventory (2010 baseline).
Community and Government GHG Reduction Target	Completed	The City of Albany adopted community and government GHG reduction targets for 2030 (using 2009 baseline) as part of the Albany 2030 Plan. Targets include a 10% reduction in Commercial, Residential, and Industrial emissions, a 20% reduction in community VMT, a 65% solid waste diversion rate, a 10% reduction in emissions from wastewater treatment, a 25% reduction in emissions from City buildings, a 15% renewable energy goal for City energy, a 10% alternative vehicles goal for municipal fleet.
Government Operations Climate Action Plan	Completed	A Climate Action Plan was created and included in Albany's Comprehensive Plan and was adopted by the Albany Common Council in 2012.

Pledge Element 3: Decrease Community Energy Use

Action	Status	Description
Energy Master Plan	In progress	With funding from and coordination by the New York Power Authority (NYPA), the City will be completing an Energy Master Plan addressing opportunities for enhanced energy efficiency in buildings, infrastructure, transportation systems, as well as for renewable energy. Included in this process will be ASHRAE Level 1 audits of the City's least efficient and highest consuming municipal buildings.
Green Purchasing Policy	In progress	The green purchasing policy is pending final approval from the Mayor?s Office. As of Sept 2013, City is considering updates to the policy prior to seeking approval from the incoming administration.
Establish a Revolving Energy Fund	Identified	To better support efficiency efforts and realize tangible improvements to municipal buildings, the City will explore the feasibility of establishing a revolving energy fund for ongoing implementation of ECMs.
Energy Manager	Identified	The City seeks to create the position of Energy Manager, who will actively monitor energy consumed by the City's buildings, manage projects aimed at reducing energy consumption, and provide City department heads or other leadership with energy bills and consumption data to facilitate goal setting.
Anti-Idling Policy	Completed	The City's Department of General Services instituted a no idling policy for its drivers.
Upgrade Interior Lighting	Completed	In 2011, the City of Albany Department of General Services completed lighting upgrades in 23 City buildings. National Grid provided 70% of the cost of these upgrades. Upgrades included switching lights to CFLs and LEDs and installing motion sensors. Savings are estimated to be around $55,000 a year.
Replace Traditional Vehicles with Advanced Vehicles	Completed	In 2009, Department of General Services (DGS) received an award to purchase 12 hybrid vehicles. DGS has already purchased 7 hybrid vehicles, including a hybrid waste hauler and a hybrid hydraulic vehicle. The City will incorporate more hybrids into the municipal fleet.
Municipal Energy Tracking	Identified	The City is considering using a web-based energy data management tool such a the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency?s ENERGY STAR® Portfolio Manager.
Staff Training on Energy Conservation Policy	Completed	The City of Albany has adopted an Energy Conservation Policy and has trained employees on the new policies and procedures.

Pledge Element 4: Increase Community Use of Renewable Energy

Action	Status	Description
Long-term Energy Supply Strategy	Identified	The City seeks to develop a long-term energy supply strategy that will assess clean energy options, develop a plan to integrate clean energy resources into the consumption mix, and establish a process to procure clean, affordable, reliable energy that helps the City meet its renewable energy and greenhouse gas reduction goals.
'Rentricity' Hydrokinetic Generator Phase 2 Feasibility Study	In progress	The City has received a grant from NYSERDA and has released a RFP for the second phase of its 'Rentricity' Hydrokinetic generator feasibility study, to include monitoring equipment.
Renewable Energy Installations on City Properties	In progress	The City issued an RFP in October of 2013 for the design, installation, and commissioning of renewable energy systems at City of Albany Land - Coeymans, Dept of General Services and at the Loudonville Reservoir.
`Rentricity? Hydrokinetic Generator Feasibility Study	Completed	The City completed a feasibility study for a hydrokinetic generator to be installed at the water department.

Pledge Element 5: Realize Benefits of Recycling and Other Climate-Smart Solid Waste Management Practices

Action	Status	Description
Expand Waste Diversion and Reduction Efforts	Identified	The City's Climate Action Plan seeks ways to further reduce waste generation and divert waste from the landfill. Proposed strategies include Pay-As-You-Throw programs, creating a green demolition program, and expanding the organics diversion program.
Yard Waste Program	Completed	The City of Albany offers weekly curbside yard waste pick up. Residents also can receive free mulch from the City compost facility.
Big Belly Solar Recycling Bins	Completed	The City of Albany purchased and placed 93 solar powered trash compactors and 20 compacting recycling containers in streets throughout the city.
Employee Recycling	Completed	The City of Albany offers single stream recycling in municipal offices. Internal sustainability ambassadors have been trained on the recycling program and have distributed appropriate materials to all departments.
Recycling Program	Completed	The City of Albany offers single stream recycling to all residents and employees.

Pledge Element 6: Reduce Greenhouse Gas Emissions Through Use of Climate-Smart Land-Use Tools

Action	Status	Description
Transit Oriented Development Guidebook	Completed	The City developed a Transit Oriented Development Guidebook that was completed in January 2013.
Bicycle Signage and Wayfinding Strategy	Completed	The City of Albany worked with CDTC and Alta Planning + Design on a strategy and implementation plan for citywide bicycle signage and wayfinding. This plan was created in conjunction with the Bike Share Feasibility Study and was completed in June 2013.
Establish Green Building Codes	In progress	The City is incorporating green building codes into its Albany 2030 Sustainable Code Project and Unified Sustainable Development Ordinance.
Develop and Adopt a Sustainable Comprehensive Plan	Completed	The City adopted Albany 2030 in April 2012. This comprehensive plan incorporates a sustainable approach that will guide local (re)development and (re)investment in a manner that meets the needs of residents, businesses, and stakeholders, while maintaining and elevating the City?s character, quality of life, and environmental and fiscal health.
Intermodal Transit Center	Identified	The City?s Climate Action Plan seeks to create ?an Intermodal Transit Center (regional/local bus service) with connections to the Rensselaer Amtrak Station and Albany International Airport.?
Electric Vehicle Feasibility Study	Completed	The City received a cost share research agreement from NYSERDA and NYDOT to conduct a feasibility study on installing electric vehicle charging stations. The study assessed ways to incorporate electric vehicles into the municipal fleet and identified zoning or policy changes to better accommodate electric vehicle infrastructure.
Bike Share Feasibility Study	Completed	The City of Albany worked with CDTC and Alta Planning + Design on a study to determine the feasibility of establishing a bike share program in Albany. This plan was created in conjunction with the Bicycle Signage and Wayfinding Strategy and was completed in June 2013.
Develop and Implement a Complete Streets Policy	Completed	On June 3, 2013, the City's Common Council adopted the Complete Streets policy (Ordinance 2.11.13 - replacement of Article VI of Chapter 323 of City Code). The policy calls for guidelines and implementation plan, which are now in the early stages. If the City receives Cleaner Greener Communities implementation funds, urban design codification will interplay with this effort.
Traffic Signal Optimization	In progress	Albany has begun implementing a signal optimization program to reduce traffic congestion and associated impacts.
Provide Expedited Permitting for Electric Vechile Charging Infrastructure	Identified	To encourage developers to incorporate EV charging infrastructure into their projects, the City will provide expedited permitting and inspection processes as applicable.

Pledge Element 6: Reduce Greenhouse Gas Emissions Through Use of Climate-Smart Land-Use Tools

Action	Status	Description
Bicycle Master Plan	Completed	The City of Albany has completed and begun to implement a 20 year bicycle master plan.
Multi-Modal Transit Options	Identified	The City?s Climate Action Plan seeks to promote multi-modal and hybrid/electric transit options. It also seeks to increase connectivity between neighborhoods.
Urban Forestry Program	Identified	The City's Climate Action Plan seeks to develop and implement an urban forestry program. The City applied for funds from USFS to update the tree canopy inventory to look at urban heat island effect and adaptability of current tree canopy. Unfortunately the City did not receive these funds and the program is on hold until funding becomes available.

Pledge Element 7: Enhance Community Resilience and Prepare for the Effects of Climate Change

Action	Status	Description
NY Prize Phase 1 - Microgrid Feasibility Study	Completed	The City of Albany conducted feasibility studies for microgrid for two areas: the empire state plaza area and the university heights area.
Quail Street Complete Streets Project	In progress	The Quail Street Green Streets Project is located in the Albany Education District between Madison and Central Avenue. This project will incorporate green infrastructure improvements into a streetscape upgrade. This "green street" project will utilize bioretention, permeable pavement, and other green infrastructure methods to reduce stormwater runoff and improve water quality.
Encourage Xeriscaping	Completed	The City's Water Department has installed a rain garden at the corner of Pinewood Avenue & Hackett Boulevard using a design created by members of the Helderberg Neighborhood Association with assistance from the Water Department.
State Street Green Infrastructure Project	In progress	The City of Albany is implementing a green infrastructure project that includes retrofitting portions of the sidewalk with bioretention areas, or rain gardens, to treat stromwater runoff from sidewalks and roadways. The State Street green infrastructure project is expected to be completed in 2013.
Climate Vulnerability Assessment and Adaptation Plan	Completed	Albany?s Climate Change Vulnerability Assessment and Climate Adaptation Plan builds off of the NYSERDA ClimAID report by analyzing how climate change could affect Albany?s people, infrastructure and natural resources and providing recommendations and strategies on how to improve the city?s resilience and adaptive capacity.

Pledge Element 7: Enhance Community Resilience and Prepare for the Effects of Climate Change

Action	Status	Description
North Swan Street Green Infrastructure Project	In progress	The North Swan Street Park is designed to improve existing infrastructure with green initiatives, which are consistent with the EPA?s Green Project Reserve. The goal is to reduce impervious cover by at least 25% by increasing permeable pavers, bioretention, soil restoration and decompaction, vegetated swales and tree plantings. This reduction would qualify the project under NYSDEC?s redevelopment criteria for Water Quality Treatment and Runoff Reduction. Completion of the park is currently anticipated for 2014.
Use Green Infrastructure to Manage Stormwater	In progress	Daylighting the Patroon Creek is a green infrastructure project to address intense water flow, flood hazards and other damaging issues at the Tivoli Lake Preserve. http://www.albany2030.org/community/patroon-creek

Pledge Element 8: Support Development of a Green Innovation Economy

Action	Status	Description
Adopt a Building Energy Benchmarking and Disclosure Law	Identified	The City seeks to adopt a building energy benchmarking and disclosure law that provides transparency around building energy performance and encourages energy improvements in existing buildings. Such programs typically require owners of nonresidential and multifamily buildings to track and publicly report their annual energy usage.
City of Albany Green Business Program	In progress	The City of Albany Green Business Program is a voluntary partnership between business leaders, government agencies and nonprofit organizations to improve overall efficiency, save money, and reduce their environmental footprint as a means to creating a more sustainable Albany. The City is currently working with the Urban Sustainability Directors Network (USDN) on developing national standards for green business certification.
Training on Energy Codes	Identified	The City is considering developing a training program focused on building energy codes for designers, contractors, and local code officials.
Create a Green Jobs Training Program	Identified	The City is looking to support a green jobs training program to enhance the workforce?s access to ?green? skills development in the fields of renewable energy and energy efficiency. The City will leverage existing green jobs training programs, including those provided by NYSERDA and its local training partners, and connect individuals or local companies to state or regional resources to support green skills development.
Residential Energy Efficiency Program or PACE Program	Identified	In its Climate Action Plan, the City identified creating a residential energy efficiency program or a PACE program as a strategy to reduce GHG emissions.

Pledge Element 8: Support Development of a Green Innovation Economy

Action	Status	Description
Adopt Residential Energy Conservation Ordinance	Identified	The City is considering adopting a Residential Energy Conservation Ordinance (RECO) that would establish energy efficiency and water conservation standards for all types of residential properties, including single-family homes, mixed-use buildings, condominiums and multifamily properties.
Energy Matching Grant	Completed	The City used their remaining EECBG funding to create an energy matching grant program for local businesses to provide incentives for them to make energy efficiency improvements. http://www.albanyny.org/Files/EnergyEfficiencyConservationBlockGrantSmallBusinessProgram3912.pdf

Pledge Element 9: Inform and Inspire the Public

Action	Status	Description
Website and Social media	Completed	The City of Albany has a sustainability website at www.albanysustainability.org as well as Facebook and Twitter accounts.
Create an Energy Reduction Challenge	Completed	In 2012, Albany?s Affordable Housing Partnership completed a year-long neighborhood energy challenge that included participants who received residential energy efficiency audits supported by NYSERDA. The City would like to launch a new neighborhood energy challenge that builds off existing resources and lessons learned from that challenge.
Neighborhood Energy Challenge	Completed	This program allows Albany residents to challenge each other to make homes and neighborhoods more energy efficient. Residents take a home energy assessment and then make upgrades based on the recommendations. The neighborhood with the highest percentage of participating homes receives a green enhancement package. www.greencapitalregion.org

Pledge Element 10: Commit to an Evolving Process of Climate Action

Action	Status	Description
Capital Region Sustainability Plan	Completed	The City of Albany was the lead coordinator for Capital District's regional sustainability planning process. Under Phase I of NYSERDA's Cleaner, Greener Communities Program, each region developed a regional comprehensive sustainability plan. http://sustainablecapitalregion.org/
STAR Community Index Pilot Community	In progress	The City of Albany is a pilot community for the STAR Community Index and will be recognized as one of the first cities to be rated for its sustainability efforts using the index.

For more information about the City of Albany's climate protection efforts, please contact: Kate Lawrence at (518) 434-5250