



Climate Smart Communities

November 2015

City of Saratoga Springs

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 Saratoga Springs'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: 2011

CSC Pledge Elements Addressed: 10 out of 10

Total Actions Completed: 33

Government Type: City

County: Saratoga County

Region: Capital District

Population: 26,586

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
ICLEI Member	Completed	Saratoga Springs was an ICLEI member from 2006 to 2014.
Sustainable Saratoga Task Force	Completed	Sustainable Saratoga was established as a not-for-profit organization in 2010 to promote sustainable practices and the protection of natural resources, through education, advocacy and action, for the benefit of current and future generations in the Saratoga Springs area. http://www.sustainablesaratoga.org/
Adopted CSC Pledge	Completed	Saratoga Springs adopted the Climate Smart Communities Pledge in 2011.
CSC Certification	Identified	The City is interested in becoming a Certified Climate Smart Community
Appoint a Sustainability Coordinator	In progress	The City received a grant from NYSERDA to hire a part-time Sustainability Coordinator to implement the unified development code and associated sustainability activities. An RFP has been released seeking responses from consultants to assist the City.
Climate Smart Task Force	Completed	The City established a Climate Smart Task Force that consists of internally appointed government staff members and external volunteers to oversee elements of the Climate Smart Communities program.

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

Action	Status	Description
Community GHG Inventory	Completed	The City's community-wide inventory was conducted as part of the Capital District's Regional Greenhouse Gas Inventory for baseline year 2010.
Develop a Climate Action Plan	Identified	The City is interested in working with Sustainable Saratoga to develop a Climate Action Plan that focuses on greenhouse gas reductions using the CSC Climate Action Plan Template.
Community and Government GHG Reduction Target	Completed	Saratoga Springs adopted the Mayors' Climate Protection Agreement target of reducing GHG emissions 7% below 1990 levels by 2012.
Government GHG Inventory	Completed	Cool Cities Saratoga Springs completed a greenhouse gas inventory for Government Operations.

Pledge Element 3: Decrease Community Energy Use

Action	Status	Description
Installed an Energy Management System	Completed	In 2007 the City installed an energy management system, which is monitored and managed by Johnson Controls.
Converting City Traffic Lights to LED Lamps	Completed	The City converted traffic lights to LED lights.

Pledge Element 4: Increase Community Use of Renewable Energy

Action	Status	Description
2 MW Solar Installation on Landfill	In progress	The City was awarded State funding for a 2 megawatt (MW) solar array installation on the city-owned landfill that will begin construction in Spring 2015.
Solarize Campaign	Completed	The City was awarded a NY-Sun grant to encourage renewable energy generation in the community through a Solarize Campaigns that help homeowners understand the process and collaborate with other interested parties.
Expedite Solar Permits	Completed	The City has aligned their solar permitting processes to be consistent with the procedures outlined in the NYS Unified Solar Permits to expedite the solar permitting processes throughout the City.
Geothermal at Recreation Center	Completed	In 2010 the City installed a geothermal system to meet the HVAC needs of the City Recreation Center.
Solar Panel Installations at the Wastewater Treatment Plant	Completed	In 2008, the City installed a 12.6 kW solar project to power its wastewater treatment facility. The City took the opportunity to install the latest in solar panels in the plant.

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

Action	Status	Description
Offer Recycling to Residents	Completed	The City offers curbside, single stream recycling to residents.
Yard Waste Program	Completed	The City collects residential yard waste at their composting facility to divert organic material away from landfills.
City Hall Recycling Program	Completed	City Hall has instituted a comprehensive recycling of office paper, cans, glass and newspaper.

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

Action	Status	Description
Public Recycling Bins	Identified	The City would like to provide recycling bins in public places and at events to encourage community-wide recycling.
Bring Your Own Bag (BYOBag) Saratoga	Completed	Bring Your Own Bag Saratoga is an initiative to change retailers' and consumers' dependence on single-use plastic shopping bags. Sustainable Saratoga has launched a petition to ban single-use plastic bags and continues to educate local businesses on their negative impacts on the environment.

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

Action	Status	Description
Unified Development Code	In progress	The City received a NYSERDA grant for a Unified Development Code that aligns the City's multiple policy objectives (including the Complete Streets Policy, Urban Forestry Master Plan, etc.) and updates guidance, standards, and regulations.
Open Space Bond Act	Completed	Extensive efforts have been made to build support for the protection of open space on a city-wide scale, culminating in voter approval of a \$5 million open space bond authorization in 2002. Key purchases include property acquisition to re-establish access to Saratoga Lake waterfront and the preservation of the Ten Spring Woods, and more than 130 acres in open space acquisition and preservation.
Safe Routes to School	Completed	The City of Saratoga Springs, Saratoga County was awarded funding for Safe Routes to School to improve sidewalks, crosswalks and pedestrian signal installations near Geyser Road Elementary School, and for safety education.
Develop a Bicycle/Pedestrian Plan	In progress	The City received a grant from the Capital District Transportation Committee to create a bicycle and pedestrian plan.
Adopt an Anti-Idling Policy	Completed	In 2013, the City passed an anti-idling law in 2013 in coordination with Skidmore College students. Their efforts are focused on the larger vehicles where they can see the largest GHG reductions.
Installed EV Charging Stations in City Garages	Completed	The City installed seven electric vehicle charging stations in City garages.

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

Action	Status	Description
Transect Zone Design	Completed	The City incorporated Transect Zone Design as an overlay district in the City of Saratoga Springs Zoning Ordinance. Transect Zones are designed to be more flexible with a focus on sound architectural and site design elements to encourage creative and sustainable new and in-fill development. (http://www.saratoga-springs.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=226&Itemid=130)
Adopted a Comprehensive Plan	In progress	The City of Saratoga adopted a Comprehensive Plan and is updating it to better address future land use, transportation, energy, open space, and housing.
Complete Streets Policy and Implementation	Completed	The City Council has adopted a Complete Streets policy on May 1, 2012 and established an advisory board to provide input on new construction projects to ensure a thorough complete streets approach.
Urban Forestry Management Project	Completed	The City was awarded a matching grant from NYS DEC to complete an Urban Forest Management Plan. Sustainable Saratoga organized a volunteer effort to inventory the City's street and park trees, provide analysis and create a database of tree locations, species and conditions. The City has contracted for technical assistance to develop this information into an Urban Forest Management Plan for presentation to the City Council. http://www.sustainablesaratoga.org/about-us/initiatives/the-urban-forestry-project/

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

Action	Status	Description
Implementation of Green Infrastructure Practices	Completed	The City has implemented several green infrastructure projects including Saratoga Springs' first-ever application of a new porous road surface material that reduces stormwater runoff. In addition, the City has installed rain gardens and bio-retention areas within private approved subdivisions and installed a green-roof at a private downtown redevelopment project.
Stormwater Management Program	Completed	In 2003, the City began work on a comprehensive program to preserve the local water quality of local water resources by focusing attention on stormwater pollution prevention. This is part of a state mandated initiative, known as the Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System Program. (http://www.saratoga-springs.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=92&Itemid=133)

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

Action	Status	Description
Source Water Protection Program	Completed	The City has a Watershed Management Plan for Saratoga Lake and is continuously working with the Open Space Committee to strategically purchase available land surrounding the watershed to improve water quality and protect resources.
Floodplain Protection Ordinance	Completed	Saratoga Springs passed a Floodplain Damage Prevention ordinance: http://www.ecode360.com/6519281?highlight=floodplains#6519280
Multi-Hazard Mitigation Plan	In progress	The City is participating in Saratoga County's Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan and has submitted an RFP to improve energy efficiency and resiliency of the City's wastewater treatment plant.

Pledge Element 8: Support Development of a Green Innovation Economy

Action	Status	Description
Join the Energy Improvement Corporation	In progress	The City is considering joining the Energy Improvement Corporation to finance energy efficiency and renewable energy upgrades in residential and commercial properties. The City is hoping to partner with the County to implement the Energize NY (PACE) Benefit Financing Program.
Local Farmers Markets	Completed	The City organizes year round farmers markets, twice a week in the winter and 3 times per week in the summer, and local farmers can apply for roadside stand permits.
Buy Local Campaign	Identified	The City is interested in formalizing a Buy Local or Buy Green Campaign and is considering aligning efforts with the Capital Region Sustainability Plan.
Agricultural Training Center	In progress	The City is working with local farmers to develop an agricultural training center that focuses on the cultivation of organic foods and culinary training experience.

Pledge Element 9: Inform and Inspire the Public

Action	Status	Description
"10 Great Streets for 2012" APA Award	Completed	The American Planning Association designated Broadway Street in the City as one of the "10 Great Streets for 2012" under its Great Places in America program. Broadway was selected for its compatible new construction, revitalization efforts, and diversity of uses, among other elements. (http://www.planning.org/greatplaces/streets/2012/)

Pledge Element 9: Inform and Inspire the Public

Action	Status	Description
Treetoga: Centennial Trees 2015	In progress	To celebrate Saratoga's past 100 years, the City is orchestrating a campaign to facilitate the public-private planting campaign of large-growing trees in 100 prominent, high impact locations across the City.
Saratoga Facebook and Twitter	Completed	The Sustainable Saratoga Committee uses Facebook and Twitter to engage the public on sustainability initiatives and to promote events to get involved in climate protection efforts.
Sustainable Saratoga Website	Completed	The Sustainable Saratoga Committee maintains a website to promote sustainable practices and environmental issues and educate the community on how to get involved and take action.

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

Action	Status	Description
Capital Region Sustainability Plan	Completed	City of Saratoga Springs participated in 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/

For more information about the City of Saratoga Springs's climate protection efforts, please contact: Bradley Birge at (518) 587-3550 ext. 2515



**Climate Smart
Communities**

The Climate Smart Communities Program is jointly sponsored by six New York State Agencies: the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA), Department of State, Department of Environmental Conservation, Department of Health, Department of Transportation, and Public Service Commission.