

Claverack Climate Smart - 'Path to Bronze' Presentation - Report and Recommendations - 7/8/21 - John Bradley, Climate Smart Coordinator

Good evening, This report is an update on our progress to reach Bronze Certification and includes two recommendations for our path forward over the next year or so.

The worksheet 'Path to Bronze' lists what is completed, what is in progress, and what we have been evaluating as opportunities to reach our goal.

- We have previously discussed the Certification Framework and the 130+ actions under the 10 Pledge Elements that all towns make in joining Climate Smart. Bronze is the first certification level and requires completing Actions that earn 120 certification points.
- The financial benefits of Bronze certification are cost savings on energy and improved scores on grant applications.
- For example, NYS DEC has \$10 M available for Climate Smart projects, some of which would be relevant for new municipal construction. We do not have the track record or organizational capability to submit a grant application in this round. Our goal is to get there, and a reason to get to Bronze.

Path to Bronze identifies practical and feasible actions for Claverack to adopt over the coming months to reach the goal.

- These actions are drawn from the first 4 Program Elements - building our approach, setting goals and planning, reducing energy use and shifting to renewables.
- The CSC Committee has investigated many Actions under most of the Pledge Elements and has consulted with Capital District Regional Planning Commission (CDRPC) technical staff and other Climate Smart committees concerning some of these actions.
- Many important actions in PE 5-10 require a more complicated capability and seem appropriate for future planning and action.

Our Climate Action Planning process will build on the Greenhouse Gas Inventory and other opportunities that have been discussed

- Climate Action Planning (CAP) is a Priority Action for Bronze, and the Greenhouse Gas Inventory of Government Operations is a starting point to identify opportunities to reduce emissions from town operations.
- The CDRPC staff processed our energy use data and we will provide a finished report for the August Town Board meeting. In addition to actions that flow logically out of the inventory, actions under other Pledge Elements are considered and are included in the Path to Bronze for later consideration.
- The planning process is an important requirement for Bronze certification.

Many of the actions we have identified relate to how the town approaches the new town hall project. This is a *generational* opportunity and requires thorough and thoughtful planning.

- It will shape town operations, impact community spirit, and be an example for the future.
- The 21st Century will become carbon free and we need to push in this direction whenever we can.

- A town that adapts and prepares for the low emissions future will have an easier time attracting businesses and retaining a diverse population, especially younger folks.

Climate Smart thinking in the Town Hall's planning and construction will serve the town well over the life of the building - 75+ years?

- We can reduce the town's climate impact, lower energy related operating costs, and improve the town's competitiveness when we apply for grants.
- A net zero town hall utilizing renewable energy (hydro and/or solar) would drive the building's energy costs to close to zero.

Climate Smart 'Path to Bronze' and building a new Town Hall are interdependent processes that require similar professional competencies.

- The Climate Smart Actions in the Path to Bronze require technical expertise that is beyond the current capabilities of our Climate Smart Committee volunteers and the Town Board and staff.
- Similarly, the new building project requires competent professional expertise to lead a planning process and assure good design and project management.
- The two planning processes, Climate Action and the town hall overlap significantly and can benefit each other.

With these considerations in mind , the Climate Smart Committee in its advisory role offers two recommendations:

- 1) **Support an ongoing Climate Action Planning process**
 - a) Consistent with the guidelines in the Certification Framework;
 - b) Establish subcommittee to include more Town Staff and volunteer experts;
 - c) Help coordinate with Town Hall project;
- 2) **Engage a design firm to lead a planning process for the Town Hall project:**
 - a) Provide for multiple stakeholders interests to be voiced and heard;
 - b) Assure design to the highest level of energy efficiency feasible;
 - c) Good planning and design can only help to better attain project goals.

I look forward to questions and further discussion of many of these topics.

Our CSC is still a small group. To implement the Path to Bronze, we need to keep building our Climate Smart Committee, and increase awareness and knowledge in the town - both in and outside of government.

Claverack Climate Smart Committee: John Bradley, Coordinator, Katy Cashen (Town Council), Jeff Kiplinger, Josh Nislich, Imre Varga, Richard Weninger, and Thomas Paino (Advisor, Architect and Philmont CSC Coordinator)

Attachments: Pathway to Bronze Spreadsheet

Climate Smart Claverack - Pathway to Bronze Certification - a Planning Sheet - 7/8/21 John Bradley, Coordinator,

Program Element	Actions Completed in past few years	Points	Type or Project	Planning, Grant ?
PE 1	Create CSC Task Force	20	Mandatory	
PE 1	Appoint CSC Coordinator	10	Mandatory	
PE 3	Energy Benchmarking Gov Bldgs	2-5	CEC	
PE 6	Unified Solar Permit	5	CEC	
PE 3	Energy Code Enforcement Training	5	CEC	
PE	Cleen Fleets - Installed EV Charging Station	4-18	CEC	
PE 6	Develop Natural Resource Inventory	8-10	Priority	
PE 5	Waste Reduction Education - Nov 17 & May 6	2		
	Subtotal - Estimate for Bronze	56 (min)		
	Actions in progress approved by Town Board			
PE 2	Gov Operations Green House Gas Inventory	16	Priority	
PE 3	LED Street Lights (NYSEG and Nat'l Grid)	5-10		
PE 4	Renewable Energy Feasibility- Hydropower for New Muni Bldg	3-5		
	In Progress Subtotal Estimate for Bronze	24		
	Actions presently under consideration/study by the CS Committee			
PE 2	Invenetory, Goals & Plan - Gov Operations Climate Action Plan (CAP) - the logical follow up to the GHG Inventory	12-16	CAP is Ongoing Process	
PE 3	Decrease energy use -Green Building Certification (New Municipal Bldg)	15	CAP, Town Hall	
PE 3	PE 2 (12) and PE 3 (15) Est for Bronze	27		
PE 4	Shift to Clean Renewable Energy - Action: Power Purchase Agreement for Renewables (Hydro Power Option)	9-20	CAP, Town Hall	
PE 4	Renewable Energy - Solar Energy Instalation (possible component of CAP, such as Garage)	9-20	CAP	
	PE 4 Hydro Power PPA Est for Bronze	9		
PE 5	Climate Smart Materials Management - Organics Waste Management Plan, recycling bins , composting	2-16+	Zero Waste Col or County Collab	
PE 6	Climate Smat Land Use - NY Stretch Energy Code	10	CAP, Comp Plan	
PE 6	Green Building Standards for Gov Bldkngs	2-5	CAP, Town Hall	
PE 6	Comprehensive Plan with Sustainability Elements	3	Comp Plan	
PE 6	Improve B&A Rail Trail as Senior Pedestrian Path	2-15		
PE 7	Enhance Community resilience to Climate Change - Actions: Climate Adaptation Plan, Conserve Natural Areas,	3-11+	CAP, Comp Plan	
PE 7	Action: Cooling Centers	1-9	CAP, Town Hall	
	PE 7 (cooling center as part of Town Hall?) Est for Bronze	3		
PE 8	Green Innovation Economy - Solarize, Solar for All Campaign	5	CAP - later stage	
PE 9	Inform and Inspire the Public - Climarte Change Education and Engagement	4-8	Ongoing	
PE 9	Social Media - inform community about progress	3	Ongoing	
PE 10	Engage in Evolving Process of Climate Action - Report on Progress Annually	4		
	PE 9 and PE 10 (Annual Report) Est for Bronze	7		
	Bronze Certifications Target	120		
	Subtotal Estimate for Bronze	126		

Reference Information on all Pledge Elements and Actions are available on the NYS Climate Smart Communities website:

Notes Certification Framework <https://climatesmart.ny.gov/actions-certification/certification-overview/certification-framework/>
 Actions details with useful references at: <https://climatesmart.ny.gov/actions-certification/actions/#close>
 DEC Grants (\$10 M available) app due 7/30/21: [https://www.dec.ny.gov/docs/administration_pdf/2021cscrfa\(1\).pdf](https://www.dec.ny.gov/docs/administration_pdf/2021cscrfa(1).pdf)

Certification Framework - Pledge Elements

<https://climatesmart.ny.gov/actions-certification/certification-overview/certification-framework/>

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The Climate Smart Communities (CSC) certification framework is organized around the ten elements of the CSC pledge. Local governments that have signed the pledge, known as Registered Climate Smart Communities, have made a commitment to addressing the ten areas described below.

1. **Build a climate-smart community.** Building a local team to foster positive change by designating a point person and creating a CSC task force with community members. Connect to larger networks by joining a regional or national climate campaign focused on reducing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions or enhancing sustainability.
2. **Inventory emissions, set goals, and plan for climate action.** Gather data about local GHG emission sources. Develop baseline emissions inventories for government operations and the community. Develop a local action plan for reducing emissions that includes specific GHG reduction targets and strategies to achieve those targets.
3. **Decrease energy use.** Lead by example. Reduce emissions and save taxpayer dollars by reducing energy demand in public facilities, infrastructure, and vehicle fleets, and maximizing energy efficiency across municipal operations.
4. **Shift to clean, renewable energy.** Adopt a policy to power government operations with clean energy. Conduct studies to examine the feasibility of renewable energy installations on public property. Implement renewable energy projects such as solar, wind, geothermal, or small hydro.
5. **Use climate-smart materials management.** Reduce the volume of solid waste and increase recycling in government operations. Encourage and support waste reduction, reuse, recycling, and composting of materials. Educate the community and offer recycling and composting programs, and waste-diversion opportunities that focus on reducing and reusing materials.
6. **Implement climate-smart land use.** Minimize the GHG impact of new development through smart-growth strategies. Adopt community plans, land-use policies, building codes, and multi-modal transportation actions to limit sprawl, reduce vehicle miles traveled, support local agriculture, and protect open lands, wetlands, and forests.
7. **Enhance community resilience to climate change.** Establish a climate resiliency vision and associated goals, identify vulnerabilities to climate change effects for both government operations and the community, and develop and implement strategies to address those vulnerabilities and increase overall community resilience.
8. **Support a green innovation economy.** Lead and support the transition to a green economy by incorporating climate action and sustainability into economic

Certification Framework - Pledge Elements

<https://climatesmart.ny.gov/actions-certification/certification-overview/certification-framework/>

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development plans. Promote local green industries and offer incentives for supporting them. Adopt policies that support residents and businesses in being energy-efficient. Invest in green jobs training, farmers' markets, and brownfield redevelopment.

9. **Inform and inspire the public.** Host events and organize campaigns to educate citizens about climate change and help them discover their role in building a low-emission community that is attractive, healthy, and equitable. Create websites, and use social media outlets to publicize the local government's commitment to reducing GHG emissions and adapting to a changing climate.
10. **Engage in an evolving process of climate action.** Monitor and report on progress toward achieving goals. Engage with community members on an ongoing basis as part of considering new ideas and modifying strategies as opportunities emerge and technologies evolve. Update strategies and plans. Share success stories and cooperate with neighboring communities.

Points For Innovation and Performance

The majority of the points in the rating system can be earned through the actions associated with the ten pledge elements. However, the system has been designed to reward local governments that have implemented innovative actions and can demonstrate achieved GHG emissions reductions and other performance metrics. Thus, applicants can earn additional points by demonstrating innovation or high levels of performance.

Innovation Earn additional points for using innovative strategies for the implementation of climate action actions. Applicants achieve this by implementing advanced actions not included in the rating system or using an innovative approach to implementing an action in the rating system. Innovation bonus points are determined on a case-by-case basis.

Performance Earn additional points for demonstrating quantified reductions in GHG emissions and solid waste volume resulting from the implementation of specific actions. This requires applicants to provide relevant data with before and after measurements to confirm achievement.

For more information, explore the links in the website at top of page.