
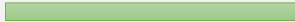




TOWN OF KENNEBUNK

2020 Sustainability and Coastal Resilience Assessment

As a 2007 signatory of the U.S. Mayor’s Climate Protection Agreement, the Town of Kennebunk has long been committed to creating a sustainable and resilient community. As part of this commitment, in 2019 Kennebunk joined a coalition of six towns in coastal York County to create the Regional Sustainability and Resilience Program. The program aims to foster more sustainable and resilient communities in coastal York County by leveraging regional collaboration to enhance the effectiveness of local government action. To identify and direct sustainability and resilience efforts, the program is establishing a baseline of sustainability and resilience efforts and needs in individual communities and the Coastal York Country region. Through the work of the Select Board and the Kennebunk Energy Efficiency Advisory Committee (KEEAC), the Town has committed to significant climate change actions as part of the Global Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy. Residents and students in Kennebunk are actively engaged in sustainability and resilience issues through KEEAC, RSU 21 school district, and non-profit partners.

Using the SMPDC Sustainability Progress Framework (SPF), Kennebunk was evaluated on many strategies within twelve sustainability and resilience categories. Strategies were grouped into 22 indicators, shown below. Kennebunk’s status on each progress indicator ranges from “Not Yet Considered” to “Excelling”. Explanations for each indicator and suggested next steps are detailed on the following pages.

CATEGORY	INDICATOR	STATUS
Climate	Establish a GHG emissions inventory, target, and plan	 Making Progress
	Climate change vulnerability assessment	 Getting Started
Coastal Hazards	Integrate coastal risk reduction measures in zoning and regulations	 Getting Started
	Incorporate future climatic conditions into land use requirements and municipal policies	 Getting Started
Economic Development	Promote and support sustainability and resiliency actions for local businesses	 Getting Started
Energy	Reduce municipal fossil fuel consumption and implement municipal energy efficiency measures	 Making Progress
	Promote energy efficiency for residents and businesses	 Getting Started
	Support development of and access to renewable energy	 Getting Started
Land Ecosystems	Promote and practice environmentally-friendly and sustainable landscape approaches	 Making Progress
Leadership	Participate as an active member of a national/regional sustainability and resilience network	 Excelling
Mobility	Promote and facilitate transit systems as well as bicycle and pedestrian networks	 Making Progress
	Adopt a complete streets policy	 Interested
	Support the electrification of the transportation system, leading by example with the municipal fleet	 Getting Started
Municipal Operations	Formally adopt sustainability and resilience goals, policies, and strategies	 Making Progress
	Establish local financing strategies for sustainability and resilience activities	 Interested
	Incorporate sustainability and resilience criteria in municipal expenditure policies	Not yet considered
Sustainable Communities	Connect residents to resources and services that support well being and enhance community resilience	 Excelling
	Actively engage community members in local climate, sustainability, and resilience issues	 Almost there
Sustainable Development	Facilitate compact, mixed-use development that reduces environmental impacts and increases housing affordability	 Making Progress
Waste & Recycling	Deliver sustainable and affordable waste management services	 Almost there
Water	Include Low Impact Development in performance and design standards	 Interested
	Establish and enforce progressive watershed protection measures	 Making Progress

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Climate: Kennebunk has a long history of leading climate initiatives, signing the U.S. Mayor's Climate Protection Agreement in 2007 and resigning in 2014. Kennebunk also joined the Global Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy (GCOM) in 2018. Kennebunk completed a municipal greenhouse gas (GHG) inventory with the help of New School students in 2019 and completed a community-wide GHG inventory with the help of a UNH Sustainability Fellow in 2020.

NEXT STEPS:

- Standardize the municipal GHG inventory data collection process by tracking building energy consumption (i.e. with EnergyStar Portfolio Manager or through the finance department).
- Work through KEEAC to establish a GHG emissions reduction target for municipal and/or community-wide emissions.
- Conduct a climate change vulnerability assessment to evaluate non-coastal vulnerabilities.
- Develop a Climate Action Plan with achievable actions to reduce community emissions and that incorporates climate adaptation measures.

Coastal Hazards: Kennebunk has taken steps to address coastal hazards, including integrating resilience measures in repair work to municipal seawalls and elevating vulnerable roads. The Town is participating in a regional grant project assessing and planning for the economic and social vulnerabilities associated with sea level rise and coastal flood events.

NEXT STEPS:

- Include updated sea level rise projections, coastal erosion rates, and goals to address those hazards in the Town's Comprehensive Plan in order to enable policies and land use measures that protect people, property, and places.
- Establish a coastal hazard overlay zoning district and accompanying development standards to ensure new and redevelopment in areas vulnerable to storm surge and future sea level rise are resilient.
- Amend the floodplain management ordinance to incorporate enhanced flood risk reduction measures such as increased freeboard height requirements and accounting for cumulative improvement costs in the definition of substantial improvement and damage.
- Pursue participation in the Community Rating System to reduce flood risk and flood insurance costs.

Economic Development: Kennebunk participated in a 2016-2018 project through Wells Reserve that focused business resilience with the Lower Village businesses.

NEXT STEPS:

- Engage the business community on climate change and resiliency issues, potentially as part of SMPDC's EDA grant-funded project on coastal economic resilience.
- Support the establishment of a regional business sustainability award or recognition program.

Energy: The Kennebunk Energy Efficiency Advisory Committee (KEEAC) was formed in 2006 to advise on ways for the Town to reduce municipal fossil fuel use and increase energy efficiency. Kennebunk completed energy audits of municipal facilities in 2016 and has been implementing simple energy efficiency measures including LED lighting upgrades and window inserts. Kennebunk has partnered with Kennebunk Light and Power to support energy efficiency measures, and KEEAC promotes energy efficiency resources on its website. Kennebunk has begun supporting the development of renewable energy, adopting a Property Assessed Clean Energy (PACE) ordinance in 2011 and allowing for small wind energy systems as an accessory use in the zoning ordinance.

NEXT STEPS:

- Complete the streetlight LED conversion project, collaborating with Kennebunk Light and Power.
- Work through KEEAC to connect residents and businesses to energy efficiency resources and educate the community about renewable energy options.
- Adopt a renewable energy ordinance prescribing the permitting, standards, and allowable use of renewable energy systems.

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Land Ecosystems: Kennebunk's Dept. of Public Works strives to manage municipal landscapes sustainably, limiting irrigation and mowing and contracting with a pest services company that uses integrated pest management strategies. The Tree Committee actively works to plant trees in locations where they make a direct, positive impact on the community or act as a buffer to filter air and water, limit storm runoff, and stabilize soil. The Conservation Commission works to protect the town's natural resources and to implement Kennebunk's Open Space Plan.

NEXT STEPS:

- Consider adapting the subdivision and development codes to encourage sustainable landscaping in the community.
- Encourage community-wide use of integrated pest management strategies through a pesticide policy and/or community education programs.
- Work through the Conservation Commission, Tree Committee and partnerships with local non-profit organizations to educate the community about the value of trees, native plants, and sustainable landscaping.

Leadership: Through the efforts of the KEEAC and the Select Board, Kennebunk is an active member of ICLEI: Local Governments for Sustainability, and the Global Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy (GCOM).

NEXT STEPS:

- Publicly report Kennebunk's community-wide GHG inventory as part of the GCOM commitment.
- Work through KEEAC to actively participate in regional/state networks, such as by reporting local data to advance national and international sustainability efforts.
- Share information about municipal leadership in sustainability and resilience broadly in the community and externally.

Mobility: While Kennebunk has no formal Bike and Pedestrian committee, the Dept of Public Works strives to improve bicycle and pedestrian safety and infrastructure. Community Development, Planning & Codes is currently exploring options for identifying gaps and barriers to bike and pedestrian travel. The Town of Kennebunk, in partnership with York County Community Action Corporation (YCCAC), recently developed the Kennebunk In-Town Transportation (KITT) network, a flex-route bus service that increases access to transit. Kennebunk does not have a Complete Streets policy, but does try to incorporate complete street principles in road redesigns. The town has begun to facilitate the electrification of the transportation system. KEEAC is working to install public EV charging stations, and the town has purchased their first EV as the Fire Chief command vehicle.

NEXT STEPS:

- Identify gaps in the bike and pedestrian networks and create a Bike and Pedestrian Plan to implement strategies for improving connectivity and safety.
- Consider establishing a Complete Streets Policy to ensure access for all road users.
- Continue to pursue public EV charging station installation and collaborate with businesses to develop EV infrastructure.
- Establish a fleet purchasing policy to prioritize electric vehicles and continue exploring EV fleet opportunities.

Municipal Operations: As part of the GCOM commitment, Kennebunk plans to create a climate action plan that will formalize sustainability and resilience goals and strategies. Kennebunk does not have regular financing strategies in place for sustainability and resilience activities outside of committee budgets. Sustainability and resilience criteria are not incorporated into Kennebunk's municipal expenditure policies.

NEXT STEPS:

- Ensure that sustainability and resilience are incorporated into the next Comprehensive Plan update.
- Create a Climate Action Plan with goals and strategies for mitigating and adapting to climate change.
- Budget and plan for long-term energy efficiency equipment upgrades.
- Integrate sustainability and resiliency into capital planning criteria.

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Sustainable Communities: Kennebunk Social Services connects residents to vital community services while the Parks and Rec. Dept. Healthy Kennebunk program promotes community well being. Kennebunk is proposing the adoption of an Emergency Management Agency Ordinance that would enhance community resilience to environmental disasters and public health crises. Kennebunk has a weekly farmers' market that increases access to local foods. The Community Garden Committee works to increase access to local foods by providing garden space and advice on growing. The KEEAC frequently partners with local non-profits to engage community members in local climate, sustainability, and resilience issues.

NEXT STEPS:

- Apply emergency management lessons from Covid-19 pandemic to increase community preparedness and resilience.
- Host events educating the public about climate change and local impacts and how to reduce GHG emissions.

Sustainable Development: Kennebunk strives to facilitate compact, mixed-use development, allowing for mixed-use in many land use zones, and working to implement the strategies in the Open Space Plan. Kennebunk has worked to redevelop underutilized properties such as in the Waterhouse Center Project. Kennebunk's affordable housing committee works to improve the availability of affordable housing.

NEXT STEPS:

- Consider revising and/or developing codes to promote sustainable building and site practices.
- Explore incentives for green building in new construction and re-construction.
- Identify sustainable development priorities in the Comprehensive Plan update.

Waste & Recycling: Kennebunk has a Pay as You Throw (PAYT) trash program, and the fees go directly to paying for curbside trash and recycling. Kennebunk has contracted with We Compost It! to offer curbside composting to residents, designating the business as the acceptable residential compost vendor in the Solid Waste Ordinance. Volunteers run the Treasure Chest, a swap shop at the transfer station to prevent the landfilling of usable goods. Kennebunk lead the state in discouraging single-use plastics, passing an ordinance banning single use plastic carry out bags in 2016 and an ordinance banning the release of balloons. Much of the education and outreach activities on waste and recycling have been coordinated through Casella. Kennebunk is also leading a lobster trap compost bin program promoting residential composting.

NEXT STEPS:

- Provide recycling and composting infrastructure at public places.
- Explore a construction and demolition recycling policy to keep C&D materials out of landfills and ensure they are recycled.
- Continue to partner with the schools to promote education about consumption and waste.
- Consider a mandatory recycling ordinance that applies to single and multifamily residences and businesses.

Water: Kennebunk has implemented water quality protection measures in the Branch Brook aquifer area and Kennebunk River Watershed. The Town participates in the Kennebunk River Watershed Management effort and is interested in pursuing improved stormwater management practices. The Conservation Commission is exploring a wetland mitigation ordinance.

NEXT STEPS:

- Enhance the Town's existing land use regulations and policies by encouraging and/or requiring the use of low impact development and green infrastructure approaches for stormwater management for all development and redevelopment projects requiring site plan review.
- Implement recommendations of the Kennebunk River Watershed Management Plan.
- Collaborate with neighbor municipalities to pursue watershed protection and flood mitigation projects.
- Complete an inventory of septic systems in Town to inform planning and water quality protection efforts.