



# REGIONAL SUSTAINABILITY AND RESILIENCE PROGRAM

## WORK PLAN



SOUTHERN MAINE  
PLANNING AND  
DEVELOPMENT  
COMMISSION

April 23, 2020

### **MEMBER TOWNS**

Kennebunk  
Kennebunkport  
Kittery  
Ogunquit  
Wells  
York

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# Regional Sustainability and Resilience Program

## Introduction:

Coastal York County communities have long been interested in sustainability and coastal resilience issues. However, limited resources, time, and expertise constrain each town's ability to implement programs and initiatives. In 2019, the towns of Kittery, Kennebunk, Kennebunkport, Ogunquit, Wells, and York sought to create a regional program to support their individual sustainability and coastal resiliency efforts. Working with the Southern Maine Planning and Development Commission (SMPDC), they created the Regional Sustainability and Resilience Program. The towns contributed funding to support the regional two-year pilot program and the creation of a Sustainability Coordinator position. Housed within and managed by SMPDC, the Sustainability and Resilience Program will support both regional and individual community efforts. SMPDC staff will coordinate and lead sustainability and coastal resiliency efforts for the six-town group with the aim of enhancing sustainability, climate preparedness, and coastal community resilience of the individual towns and of the region. They will do so by:

1. Facilitating regional coordination, advocacy, and outreach
2. Collecting, synthesizing, and disseminating relevant information and tools
3. Providing expert support with research assistance and training

This work plan lays out the Sustainability and Resilience Program mission and goals. Each program goal has associated objectives. More specific pilot program objectives (i.e. to be completed within the 2-year pilot period) are specified in the following section. Each pilot program objective has associated action items. Action items are indicated as sustainability- or coastal resiliency-related with an icon.

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## *Why a regional approach?*

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Our communities face many of the same threats and challenges regarding sustainability and coastal resiliency issues. We are all faced with strained staff capacity, limited financial resources, and lack of access to technical information and analysis. Additionally, we know that climate change does not recognize town borders and we will all be confronted by its impacts. We are creating a regional program to amplify the efforts of our individual communities and to expand our capabilities in addressing sustainability and coastal resiliency challenges. We will work toward coordinated, collective actions to promote sustainability, reduce emissions, and increase coastal resiliency within the systems we share.

We recognize that each community is at a different place in their sustainability and coastal resiliency efforts. This regional program is not intended to supplant, diminish, or supersede the authority of any of its members. All the tools, resources, and strategies developed for the program are optional for towns to adopt as they choose.

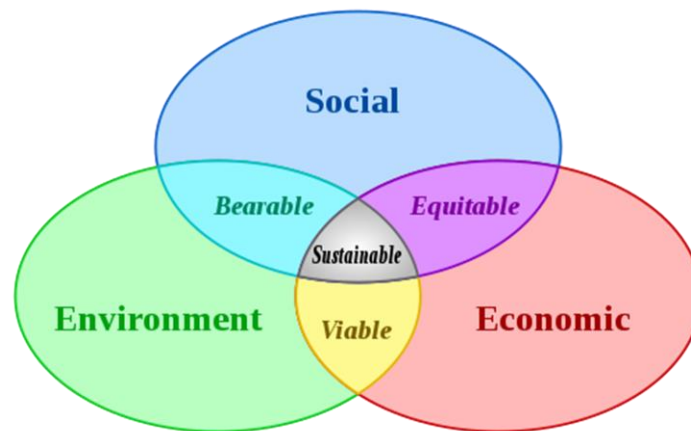
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## Program Definitions

### SUSTAINABILITY

Sustainability is when a healthy environment, economic prosperity and social justice are pursued simultaneously to ensure the well-being and quality of life of present and future generations.



### RESILIENCE

**Community resilience** is the capacity of a community to absorb, withstand, recover from and adapt to changing conditions and disturbances while sustaining key functions, structures, and performance. It involves all dimensions of a system, including social, built, and natural environments within a community.

**Coastal resilience** refers specifically to disasters and events arising from coastal hazards such as sea level rise, increased flooding, more frequent and intense storm surges, and shoreline erosion. It can be achieved by minimizing vulnerabilities through adaptation and mitigation planning.

**Climate resilience** is the ability to anticipate, prepare for, and respond to hazardous events, trends, or disturbances related to climate. Creating climate resilience consists of mitigation (*i.e.* greenhouse gas emissions reductions) and adaptation to climate change impacts.



## Program Mission

To foster more sustainable and resilient communities in Coastal York County by leveraging regional collaboration, enhancing the effectiveness of local government sustainability and resilience action.

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## PROGRAM GOALS

1. **Collaboration:** Create a collaborative network to share knowledge and coordinate efforts on sustainability and resiliency in Coastal York County.

### Objectives

- 1.1. Promote intra- and inter-community collaboration on sustainability and coastal resilience efforts
- 1.2. Broaden public understanding of regional and community sustainability and coastal resilience

2. **Assessment:** Assist with evaluation of climate change and coastal issues, priority needs for addressing impacts, and periodic progress on sustainability and resiliency initiatives.

### Objectives

- 2.1. Create assessments of sustainability and resilience for Coastal York County to establish baselines for sustainability and resilience efforts in communities and the region
- 2.2. Assist with evaluation of impacts of coastal hazards in individual municipalities and the broader Coastal York County region
- 2.3. Support towns with assessing impacts of relevant and priority coastal hazards, specifically sea level rise, coastal flooding (i.e. storm surge and increased precipitation), and shoreline change

3. **Integration:** Support communities with incorporating sustainability and resiliency into community operations, culture, planning, and decision-making.

Objectives

- 3.1 Enhance the sustainability and resilience literacy of municipal staff and the public, enabling them to make informed decisions in their work and personal lives
- 3.2 Facilitate the use of the best available coastal and resilience science in municipal resilience planning efforts
- 3.3 Aid towns with integrating resilience and vulnerability considerations and criteria in town planning and decision making
- 3.4 Promote land use strategies that protect people, property, and the natural environment from existing coastal hazards and anticipated future climate impacts

4. **Action:** Increase the community resilience of Coastal York County by coordinating climate change mitigation and adaptation planning and strategy implementation.

Objectives

- 4.1 Empower each community to increase and expand their individual sustainability and resilience efforts through education and outreach
- 4.2 Enhance towns' climate mitigation capacity by creating a regional greenhouse gas (GHG) reporting framework
- 4.3 Help each community develop the capacity to complete municipal and community wide GHG emissions inventories
- 4.4 Coordinate regional climate mitigation and adaptation initiatives that harness regional strengths
- 4.5 Support towns wishing to pursue climate action and resiliency planning
- 4.6 Assist towns with implementation of climate resilience (mitigate and adaptation) efforts

## PILOT PROGRAM

The Work Plan for the two-year pilot program was developed by SMPDC with input from each of the six member towns based on their needs, priorities, and work accomplished to-date on sustainability and resilience. The objectives, action items, and anticipated milestones of the pilot program were designed to reflect the most pressing priorities of individual municipalities with an emphasis on those which are overlapping across multiple communities to achieve a true regional approach. The Program recognizes that the six towns are all in different places on the path of sustainability and resilience planning and action. Furthermore, it is anticipated that over the course of the two-year pilot, sustainability and resilience priorities could evolve and topical issues could arise for municipalities. While this Work Plan serves as a guide for programmatic efforts, it is considered a living document that can be updated and adapted as necessary. Additionally, while the aim of the Program is to address sustainability and coastal resilience on a regional scale, some action items may not be applicable in all six of the towns. Program staff will work throughout the pilot program to ensure efforts are aligned with needs of the region as well as the needs of individual municipalities.

One of the primary approaches for addressing new and evolving priorities will be the topic-based workshop series noted in Objective 2, action item 2.3. Anticipated topics for the workshop series and for potential further investigation if identified as pressing issues include:

### Sustainability

- Recycling and waste management
- Composting program
- Weatherization implementation and programming
- Residential solar
- Renewable energy procurement, policy, and outreach
- Alternative transportation (e.g., bicycle and pedestrian programs, public transit, ride sharing programs)
- Sustainable communities (e.g., arts and culture, local food, social justice, etc.)
- Sustainable development and land conservation
- Sustainable and climate resilience economic development

### Coastal Resilience

- Coastal flooding (sea level rise and surge)
- Groundwater rise resulting from sea level rise and impacts to infrastructure
- Beach erosion, management, and nourishment; dune restoration and enhancement
- Marsh migration
- Municipal funding strategies for coastal resilience
- Low impact development, green infrastructure, and flood resilient design options for coastal infrastructure (e.g., beach parking lots)
- State regulations that promote and/or inhibit municipal resilience efforts
- Building coastal resilience through zoning and land use regulations





## OBJECTIVES AND ACTION ITEMS

### 1. Establish a baseline of sustainability and resilience efforts and needs in individual communities and the Coastal York Country region

Timeline: Assessment complete within the first 6 months of the program, with outreach in the two months following completion.

Program goals addressed: Collaboration, Assessment, Integration

#### Action Items:

-  1.1. Develop a sustainability framework to help communities assess their current/past sustainability initiatives, select suitable goals and actions, tailor objectives and strategies to advance their own sustainability agendas, and access informational resources
-  1.2. Review existing sustainability and resilience planning and policy documents to identify current municipal priorities
-  1.3. Synthesize findings and determine individual and regional priorities, goals and potential areas of collaboration
-  1.4. Report on findings in assessments of sustainability and resilience for Coastal York County that can be used as a knowledge resource for future efforts and enhance municipal and public understanding of regional and community-specific sustainability and coastal resilience

#### Milestones:

- **Completed sustainability framework**
- **Assessments of past, ongoing, and priority future sustainability and resiliency efforts for each municipality**
- **Written summary of regional assessment findings**

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#### Why?

- Provide communities with a synthesis of individual town and regional progress to date, which can be used to create outreach to staff and the broader community
- Aid towns in identifying their individual priorities to help inform municipal planning, policies, and strategies
- Collate information on individual towns' past efforts to create a resource for all communities
- Identify and prioritize areas of regional collaboration based on current, future, and desired actions of towns

#### What does success look like?

- Towns are provided with a thorough assessment of their community's sustainability and resilience efforts to date
  - The developed sustainability framework is used as a tool to identify sustainability priorities, future sustainability efforts and resources for pursuing those efforts
  - The developed sustainability framework can be shared with other communities in the region to evaluate and establish sustainability efforts
  - Outreach following the assessments gains significant exposure and interest in the communities and region
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## 2. Enhance inter-community communication and collaboration on sustainability and coastal resilience efforts

Timeline: Ongoing throughout 2-year pilot program

Program goals addressed: Collaboration

### Action Items:

-  2.1. Facilitate information sharing and collaboration between towns through the establishment of a formal and sustained information sharing network and by hosting regular meetings of that network (approximately every month for first 4 months and every other month thereafter)
-  2.2. Disseminate bi-monthly newsletter to town contacts that shares program progress, individual town updates, informational resources, and opportunities
-  2.3. Lead topic-specific workshops as needed with town contacts and/or key town staff to help towns address pressing issues in sustainability and resilience
-  2.4. Coordinate state advocacy and engagement on regional efforts

### Milestones:

- **Creation and dissemination of first newsletter**
- **Establishment of formal information sharing network comprised of staff representatives from each of the six towns participating in the pilot program**

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### Why?

- Amplify the efforts of our individual communities by using regional approaches where feasible
- Share knowledge and best practices from individual communities
- Ensure that town decision makers are well informed on tools, resources, and opportunities

### What does success look like?



- Town contacts are well informed on sustainability and resilience efforts in the region and the state through both regular meetings and the newsletter
  - Priority areas of collaboration have been identified and collaborative discussions/workshops are being held on a regular basis
  - The regional network has been formalized, convenes on a regular basis, and results in information sharing between communities about priority sustainability and resilience issues
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### 3. Help each community develop the capacity to complete community wide greenhouse gas emissions inventories

Timeline: All community inventories are complete by the end of the 2-year pilot program

Program goals addressed: Collaboration, Assessment, Integration, Action

#### Action Items:

-  3.1. Create a regional greenhouse gas (GHG) reporting framework
  - 3.1.1. Research potential platforms such as ICLEI and options for creating a coordinated reporting effort for all communities
  - 3.1.2. Pursue funding opportunities for coordinated reporting and GHG inventory/CAP training
-  3.2. Help each community complete municipal and community wide GHG emissions inventories
  - 3.2.1. Coordinate training of town staff on GHG data collection
  - 3.2.2. Create guidance documentation for inventory methodology
  - 3.2.3. Provide technical support on inventory completion and verification
  - 3.2.4. Assist with outreach on community GHG emissions to the broader public

#### Milestones:

- **GHG reporting framework established**
- **Completed communitywide GHG inventories**
- **Training of municipal staff in each community on framework and data collection**

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#### Why?

- Coastal York County communities are already experiencing the impacts of climate change from rising sea levels, increases in extreme precipitation, and warmer temperatures
- Communities want to start mitigating climate change and adapting to a low-carbon future
- A GHG emissions inventory can then be used to set reduction targets, forecast future emissions scenarios, analyze the cost and benefits of emissions reduction measures, and visualize alternative planning scenarios

#### What does success look like?


- Each community has a communitywide GHG emissions inventory
  - Community-wide GHG emissions inventories are comparable to one another and can be combined to create a regional GHG emissions inventory and report
  - Communities have established data collection procedures that allow for easier energy data collection in future years to create updated inventories
  - Communities are empowered to use their GHG emissions inventories to set reduction targets and expand climate action planning
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#### 4. Help towns expand sustainable transportation in their communities and strengthen regional collaboration on transportation initiatives

Timeline: Fleet inventories complete within 8 months of program, all other objectives are ongoing

Program goals addressed: Collaboration, Assessment, Integration, Action

##### Action Items:


 4.1. Identify the best strategies for improving municipal fleet efficiency by performing a fleet inventory for each community

 4.2. Support the growth of regional EV charging infrastructure

4.2.1. Provide analysis of where to best place EV chargers using tools to evaluate EV charging site suitability

4.2.2. Aid towns in finding and pursuing funding opportunities for EV charging stations

4.2.3. Coordinate between communities to ensure a robust, well-publicized charging network

 4.3. Collaborate with regional transportation organizations to ensure sustainability and resilience are integral parts of regional transportation efforts

4.3.1. Coordinate with the Kittery Area Comprehensive Transportation System MPO and other regional transportation projects to identify overlapping priorities and potential areas of collaboration

4.3.2. Act as a community stakeholder in Maine Clean Communities Coalition and Drive Electric Maine

##### Milestones:

- **Completed municipal fleet inventories for all communities with recommendations for decreasing fuel use and opportunities for converting to EV or hybrid vehicles**

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## Why?

- Transportation is Maine's largest sector of GHG emissions, and will likely be the largest sector for our communities
- There are currently numerous funding opportunities for low-carbon transportation available in the state and multiple active stakeholder groups
- Collaboration between towns can result in optimal development of low carbon transportation infrastructure and better funding opportunities through the leveraging of a regional program
- Regional transportation groups are responsible for the majority of large-scale transportation efforts

## What does success look like?





- Each town has identified opportunities for alternative fuel vehicles in their fleets and has started pursuing opportunities to purchase/upgrade vehicles
  - Town contacts are aware of EV charging and alternative fuel opportunities available through state and national programs
  - Town contacts are aware of the low carbon transportation initiatives occurring in the other towns and actively communicating on potential areas of collaboration
  - The program has established a working relationship with regional transportation organizations and is actively pursuing opportunities for collaboration
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## 5. Assist with the evaluation of coastal hazards and associated impacts in individual municipalities and the broader coastal York County region.

Timeline: Ongoing throughout two-year pilot program

Program goals addressed: Assessment, Integration, Action

### Action Items:

-  5.1. Develop a vulnerability assessment methodology and protocol for community-specific GIS-based assessment of economic impacts of coastal flooding and sea level rise
-  5.2. Coordinate and conduct assessments of economic and social impacts of coastal flooding and sea level rise, focusing on impacts to the social, built, and natural environments
  - 5.2.1. Conduct assessments for the towns of Kennebunk, Wells, and York through the grant-funded project *Tides, Taxes, and New Tactics*
  - 5.2.2. Conduct assessments for Kittery, Kennebunkport, and Ogunquit, as funding can support
-  5.3. Identify and summarize priority coastal hazards and issues for individual towns and the region
-  5.4. Provide technical support on priority coastal issues (i.e. sea level rise, coastal flooding, shoreline erosion, marsh migration, groundwater intrusion), impacts, and assessment methods by connecting towns with experts and coordinating training on information, tools, and resources
  - 5.4.1. Facilitate the use of best available coastal and resilience science in municipal planning efforts by providing research assistance and direct technical assistance

### Milestones:

- **Summary of priority coastal hazards and impacts to the region**
- **Completed assessment of economic impacts of sea level rise on private properties, public assets, and municipal tax revenue for towns**
- **Methodology for assessing economic impact of sea level rise on private properties, public assets, and municipal tax revenue**

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### Why?

- Increase understanding among towns and region of priority coastal hazards and potential impacts to encourage sound, proactive planning, adaptation, and mitigation
- Quantify potential economic impacts of sea level rise and coastal flooding using terminology and principles (e.g. dollars and cents) that are understandable for municipal boards and residents and can be used to evaluate decisions and for cost-benefit analyses







### What does success look like?

- Communities are aware of the potential economic impacts to private and public property associated with sea level rise and coastal flooding
  - Municipal planning, policies, and land use regulations are being revised and updated to better protect people, property, and the natural environment against coastal hazards
  - Municipal infrastructure repair, upgrade, and replacement activities consider coastal hazard impacts and the cost of incorporating adaptation strategies into those activities is better understood
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## 6. Support towns and the region with the implementation of sustainability and coastal resilience strategies and projects.

Timeline: Ongoing throughout two-year pilot program and beyond  
Program goals addressed: Integration, Collaboration, Action

### Action Items:

-  6.1. Research and advise on the creation of new sustainability and coastal resilience initiatives and projects
-  6.2. Analyze and recommend municipal funding strategies to support implementation of individual and regional strategies
-  6.3. Support attainment of external resources to fund individual and regional actions
-  6.4. Coordinate communication between town staff and committees charged with sustainability, climate, and coastal resilience related goals to ensure actions align with municipal priorities
-  6.5. Promote amendments to existing - and the creation of new – policies, zoning, and regulations that advance the towns' sustainability and coastal resilience goals
-  6.6. Development of regional sea level rise plan (through grant-funded project *Tides, Taxes, and New Tactics*)

### Milestones:

- **Towns identify sustainability and coastal resilience strategies and initiatives they would like to implement**
- **Development of regional sea level rise plan**

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### Why?

- While the two year pilot period may be too short to complete specific implementation projects and initiatives (due to the logistical constraints of budgeting and approval processes), making implementation a critical piece of the pilot program will ensure that all the pilot program objectives are working together to increase the sustainability and coastal resiliency of the member communities

### What does success look like?

- Each town is actively working with the Sustainability and Resilience Program to identify priority actions and strategies for implementation
  - The Sustainability and Resilience Program is assisting towns with the implementation of regional sustainability and coastal resilience initiatives
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## Pilot Program Timeline

MILESTONES	Related Pilot Objectives						Spring '20	Summer '20	Fall '20	Winter '20/21	Spring '21	Summer '21	Fall '21	Winter '21/22
	1. Establish baselines	2. Collaboration	3. GHG Capacity	4. Transportation	5. Coastal hazards	6. Implementation								
Program Work Plan	X						X							
Sustainability framework to assess municipal efforts to-date	X						X	X						
Review of existing sustainability and resilience work, plans, and regulations	X						X	X						
Summary report of regional and municipal status re. sustainability and resiliency	X						X	X						
Summary of priority coastal hazards and potential local impacts					X		X	X						
Methodology for GIS-based vulnerability assessment of sea level rise and coastal flooding impacts to people, property, nature, and the economy					X		X	X						
First newsletter sent, continuing bi-monthly		X					X							
Formal information sharing network established		X						X						
Start of workshop series		X						X						
Sea level rise vulnerability assessments for Kennebunk, Wells, and York					X		X	X	X					
Draft regional sea level rise plan						X		X	X					
Regional GHG reporting framework			X					X	X	X				
Training for towns on regional GHG reporting framework			X						X	X	X			
Fleet inventory for each town						X		X	X	X				
EV charging station site suitability analysis				X					X	X	X			
Assessment of economic impacts of coastal storms and sea level rise in progress					X					X	X	X		X
Direct assistance and support for implementation of sustainability and resilience initiatives						X			X	X	X	X		X

## Process Timeline

