

STEP

1

Launch the Project

YOUR GOAL

Define the scope, establish a Task Force, and build stakeholder support. This structure will provide the foundation for successful resilience planning in your community.

Task 1: Scoping

Task 2: Identify Resources

Task 3: Develop a Task Force

**Task 4: Lay the Foundation for
Engaging Your Community**

Task 5: The Kickoff

A hand holding a black pen points to a specific location on a detailed road map. The map shows various roads, cities, and geographical features. In the bottom right corner, a white coffee cup filled with dark coffee is visible. The background is slightly blurred, focusing attention on the map and the hand.

S U M M A R Y

In this step, you will set the boundaries of the project by developing the scope so that you are clear about the goals of the project, what will be included, and perhaps even more importantly, what is not going to be included. You will also identify the people and organizations that will be impacted by the decisions made in the resilience process and reach out to them in order to determine how best to get them involved. An internal analysis of community attitudes and existing work that has been done on this issue will help you determine the best way to move through this process and get resilience actions implemented. Finally, you will develop a diverse Task Force that will provide guidance and assist throughout the process. The tasks in Step 1 are designed to prepare your community to complete the various elements that will eventually result in a climate resilience plan that your community can support.

Task 1: Scoping

The first task is to define the scope, which will help you determine where to focus resources. There are several scoping issues to think through in this step: geographic, administrative, and climate action. It is often useful to gather an informal group of 3-5 people who are knowledgeable about the issue and the community's needs to think through these questions. It may be helpful to review the draft outline of a climate resilience plan in Step 5, Task 1 as you consider your scoping questions.

Geographic Scope

The geographic scope provides boundaries for your planning process. It could be based on the physical landscape, such as mountain ranges or rivers that create a natural boundary. Because water is an important resource in all communities, watershed boundaries often make sense for planning. Or the scope could be based on political boundaries, such as city or county lines. One important consideration is whether the geographic scope of the plan aligns with the entities that will be tasked with imple-

menting strategies. For instance, if your community depends on water that is managed by a neighboring community, you will want to include that water source within your geographic boundaries.

Your scope can include a single city, multiple cities and the surrounding area, a county, multiple counties, a watershed, or a larger region. For the purposes of this guide, we refer to your self-defined scope as the “community” throughout.



A “community” could be a single city, multiple cities, county, group of counties, watershed, or larger region

Administrative Scope

The resilience planning effort will be determined by your mandate, authority, partners, and funding. Here you will clearly identify:

- ▶ Why you are doing this project
- ▶ Who you are accountable to
- ▶ What authority you have to compel action or make recommendations
- ▶ Your partners
- ▶ The timeline
- ▶ Your expenses and what resources, both financial and in-kind, you have at the beginning of your process.
- ▶ Whether your planning effort is community-wide or municipal only

Many communities have specific rules, often called “sunshine laws” that require certain processes be

Municipal Only

Includes all city-owned property, land, functions, services, and processes.

Municipal Influence

Includes sectors and entities the city has influence with, such as school districts and chambers of commerce.

Community Wide

Includes all other sectors in the community that will be responsible for implementation of the climate strategies that the city does not have authority to implement.

open to the public and follow other public meeting laws. Be sure you understand any of these regulations that affect your process and build those requirements into your structure.

At this point you will determine the internal community boundaries of your project. We recommend that you do a community-wide process that engages all community systems and takes up issues that include, but are larger than, the scope of municipal government.

This structure will result in some strategies that fall entirely within a municipal government's authority, others that fall entirely outside of that authority, and some that require both municipal and civic resources and commitment. We recommend a community wide process because climate change affects all community systems, so municipal, private, and civic strategies will need to be addressed at some point. By addressing all of them as part of one comprehensive process, you will ensure that the vulnerabilities across the community are fully understood and prioritized, municipal and

EXAMPLE Anytown, USA develops a municipal only plan that addresses basic government services, but does not include community systems beyond the scope of municipal government. The process does not engage under-represented people, the local business community, or natural resource managers. Five years after they complete their plan, the community experiences a massive drought. This drought creates severe impacts for the municipality, wildlife, and the local economy, which happens to rely primarily on agriculture and outdoor recreation based tourism. Migrant farm workers are hit particularly hard economically. While the municipal only process identified water supplies as a very high vulnerability, by not consulting the other sectors that rely on those same water supplies, their strategies were insufficient. If they had included natural resource managers, local business people, and under-represented people in their climate planning process, these sectors could have been working together to reduce their collective vulnerability to drought.



private resources are invested well, and your community is able to identify and support the strategies that protect what is most important to the community.

A community wide planning process can and should be done even if your mandate is to create a municipal only climate resilience plan. In this case, the municipal plan can be developed using the Vulnerability Assessment and strategies identified in the community wide process. Simply pull out the vulnerabilities and strategies that directly link to the municipality's responsibilities to create the municipal plan.

It is important that the Vulnerability Assessment still be community-wide and that it engages under-represented people and natural resource managers.

Private and civic spheres can then develop strategies, perhaps in collaboration with the municipality, to address the remaining high priority vulnerabilities.

Counties have a number of options for moving forward with resilience planning. We recommend counties undertake a comprehensive planning process that involves leaders of cities and towns within the county. Communities within the county can then build on the work done at the county level in developing community resilience plans that integrate with the county's plan. Moving forward in this way allows for greater cooperation between counties and municipalities and can make it much more efficient and cost-effective than if each entity embarks on their own process in isolation.

Climate Action Scope

Over time you will want a roadmap that helps your community adapt to changing conditions and reduce greenhouse gas pollution. However, your situation may make it impossible to do both of these at once. Questions to ask yourself: Has your community done any work on climate change yet or is this

effort the first step it has taken? How much public support and funding do you have for this work?

It is likely that you are starting from one of these three situations:

Limited support

Your community has a large contingent of people, including some elected leaders, who actively oppose taking climate action. Such communities can begin by planning for resilience, with a focus on protecting people, property, and resources from ongoing change. Over time, awareness and understanding about changing climate conditions can lead to support for energy efficiency strategies and other ways to reduce greenhouse gas pollution.

More support

Your community has not yet done any climate action planning, but there is local support for it. Consider combining this resilience planning process with a concurrent mitigation planning effort so that you have one integrated plan. Moving both forward at once can streamline efforts and prevent burnout of engaged community members and stakeholders. See Appendix C for resources regarding mitigation planning.

Broad support

Your community has already completed a Climate Action Plan focused on reducing greenhouse gas emissions and you are ready to start the resilience planning process. You are in good shape because there are already folks engaged on the issue and you probably have quite a lot of community support. It is important to make sure the two plans are compatible, so be sure to coordinate your resilience plan with the existing Climate Action Plan.



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TIPS FOR SUCCESS

This would be a good time to familiarize yourself with some other resilience plans, and choose one or more you especially like to use as a model. Many can be found at the CAKE and Georgetown portals (See Resources below), and we have provided a few specific examples as well.

Make sure you think through the scoping questions carefully, keeping a systems view in mind, as climate impacts are rarely limited to one or two sectors. This will help you spot critical components and opportunities in your process.

If your resources are limited, rather than severely limit the scope of the project, we recommend you create a phasing plan that lets you get started with the resources you have and continue to build as you get more resources over time. You might start with a full vulnerability assessment and then begin to develop strategies to address those vulnerabilities one at a time as resources are available.

Remember that this is a draft document that you will put before your Task Force later in the process to revise and approve. It does not need to be perfect, it just needs to be good enough to get started.

OUTPUT

- A draft document that identifies the geographic, administrative, and climate action scope.

RESOURCES

A current list of resources is available on the Climate Ready Communities website: <https://climatereadycommunities.org/resilience-resources/>

Climate Adaptation Knowledge Exchange (CAKE) provides case studies and resources on climate change adaptation – www.cakex.org

Georgetown Climate Center's Adaptation Clearinghouse helps communities find resources they need to prepare for climate change – www.georgetownclimate.org

Annual Support subscribers

Template: Project Scope

Subscriber resources for this task are [here](#).

Other Services (available with or without a subscription)

Blocks of consulting time for guidance and document review

Other Services are [here](#)

Task 2: Identify Resources

Financial resources are clearly important, but other resources can be brought to bear in your planning process as well. Once you have a draft scope, it is time to develop the budget. Keep in mind that additional resources may become available throughout the planning process. Meet with a group of 3-5 people who can provide input on the availability of funds from different sources, and how to best leverage resources. If you find potential funding sources for your project, a sample grant proposal is available in Appendix F to help you request funding.

Then identify the hard costs associated with planning and community engagement processes (personnel, stipends, supplies, postage, etc.) as well as the “optional” items you want to add if new resources come available (paid facilitators and consultants, funding for outside support with community engagement, etc.). It is also a good time to think about what other resources might be available within your community. You may have trained facilitators who will help for reduced fees, restaurants that will offer food for your convenings, local organizations that will offer staff support or meeting space, etc.





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TIPS FOR SUCCESS

If there are too few resources within your organization to carry out the project, you may be able to partner with a trusted non-profit, business, university, or other organization. Partnering may create opportunities to secure outside grant funding from foundations or government agencies to do this work. When developing partnerships, look for others with energy and enthusiasm for building resilience and figure out how to work together. Get creative.

OUTPUT

- A draft budget that includes funding and in-kind contributions to handle hard costs plus as many optional items as possible.

RESOURCES

A current list of resources is available on the Climate Ready Communities website:

<https://climatereadycommunities.org/resilience-resources/>

General Resources

Appendix F – Sample grant proposal

Annual Support subscribers

Template: Project Budget

Subscriber resources for this task are [here](#).

Other Services (available with or without a subscription)

Blocks of consulting time for guidance and document review

Other Services are [here](#)

Task 3: Develop a Task Force

In this step, you will recruit a Task Force made up of dedicated people who will assist you by helping guide the planning process, and strengthen municipal leadership and public support. They will need to commit to serving for the full planning process (usually about 12–18 months if you are doing this as a do-it-yourself or assisted do-it-yourself process), which includes handing off the completed plan to an Implementation Team. Your Task Force should reflect the diverse demographics, sectors and interests at play in your community, while each member should bring strong influence in at least one community network.

A successful Task Force will usually have 8-12 people on it, but the number is somewhat flexible. If your Task Force has too few people (under 8, except in the smallest communities), it is likely to be missing some key perspectives. If it has too many people, the logistical arrangements become more difficult. Taskforce members should expect to invest 50-60 hours over 12-16 months assuming your resilience plan is complete within that timeframe. This includes 15 hours for workshops, monthly meetings (1.5 hours/month), and time to review documents and participate in public engagement efforts.

External stakeholders are critically important on your Task Force, especially informal leaders in the larger community.



Finding Stakeholders

In this task, you will identify the sectors to be included, as well as key stakeholders in each sector. It is important to include the heads of municipal or county government departments, even if you do not see the connection between their mandate and climate resilience. But government officials are not enough. External stakeholders are critically important, especially informal leaders in the larger community. Include those people who can bring vital information regarding trends, issues, and networks within your community and can help generate support for the plan. You should also include stakeholders who represent important constituencies and may not participate directly, but will want to be kept in the loop.

This is the initial list of people you will want to consider for participation on the Task Force. It will grow over the course of your project as you talk with the first stakeholders you identify and they suggest others who might be well-suited to the Task Force. The Center for Social Ecology and Public Policy has

good information regarding how best to assess the informal networks, structures, and leadership in your community.

You will use this list of stakeholders for engagement efforts, to recruit workshop participants and to develop both the Task Force and eventually the Implementation Team, so make sure that you capture their title, sector, contact information, how they would like to participate in the process, and any other notes you believe are relevant. Make sure to note if they might be a good candidate for the Task Force. We find a spreadsheet to be the best way to track this information as it changes over time.

Because of the complexity of climate change, diverse leadership and input is needed to develop a truly effective plan for resilience. It is important to engage leaders from all parts of the community, including groups that have traditionally been under-represented in city or county planning processes. As these people are often overlooked in com-

Informal Leaders

Informal leaders are people who others trust and turn to for information and help, especially in an emergency. They know their community well and are highly regarded. Informal leaders may also hold elected office, but they get their authority from their expertise and trust, not their title. You want as many informal leaders involved in the resilience process as possible.

Formal Leaders

Formal leaders are those who hold an elected or high level staff position in government or major industry (the head of the hospital, for instance). Having elected officials or department heads involved in climate resilience planning can be positive or negative, depending on their approach. For the Task Force, select formal leaders who are supportive of resilience planning, put others at ease, are unlikely to exert control over the planning process, and are willing to serve as champions or allies with other leaders and the public. Make sure to talk with them about their role and the importance of all Task Force members having the same authority within the group. You will need to make sure that this point is clear to all Task Force members.

Consider engaging people from these community systems and sectors in your process

Built Systems

Water

Wastewater
Stormwater
Residential water
Industrial/Agricultural water

Transportation

Roads
Railways
Airports
Barges and ship travel

Energy

Production
Distribution

Buildings

Residences
Industrial
Other

Natural Systems

Aquatic

Terrestrial
Marine/Nearshore

Economic Systems

Business and Industry

Forestry
Agriculture
Recreation/Tourism

Cultural Systems

Native American/Indigenous

Faith groups
Civic organizations
Local cultural groups

Social Systems

Health

Mental
Physical

Emergency Services

Preparedness
Response
Law enforcement

Leadership

Elected leaders
Government staff
Informal civic leaders

Under-represented Populations

Communities of color
Young people
Elders
People with disabilities
Homeless residents
Seasonal and/or low income workers

munity planning processes, it may not be obvious who should be contacted in this phase. If you have established relationships within these groups, start there. If not, some basic research and outreach to your networks should identify how best to connect with different community representatives. At least one person on the Task Force should be a leader from an under-represented population within your community. Several others should be engaged as stakeholders in the workshops later in the process. It may take time to develop the trust necessary for some of these people to engage in your resilience building process, but it is time well spent.

Once you have your initial list of potential stakeholders, ask a few other people who are well-connected in the community and supportive of the process to review your list and add to it. Note that if your community is very small, you will need to adjust the community systems and sectors listed below to meet your specific circumstances, but you will still want to make sure you find representation from social, economic, natural, cultural, and built systems. In many small communities, people often wear multiple hats, so you can get the five systems represented with fewer people on the Task Force.

Building Your Case

Local budgets are already severely constrained, so the stakeholders you approach will need to understand why it is important to take action. You and your small team will develop this document initially and use it as you approach potential stakeholders; you'll continue to refine it as you get feedback on its effectiveness. The document will have continued use for later engagement within your community.

The following four realities of local government are adapted from the All One Sky Foundation's Climate Resilience Toolkit (Unit 2). While focused on Alberta, Canada, this toolkit has a very good section on building the case for taking action.

1 The climate is already changing. Information about the changes already happening in your region can be found in the 4th National Climate Assessment. If possible, communicate to your community that climate change caused by greenhouse gas emissions is the cause of these impacts. If your community is not yet ready to hear that information, the case can still go forward by simply discussing the fact that climate conditions are changing without indicating the cause. Climate projections showing the local effect of these climate impacts, particularly over the short term, is essential to generating a sense of urgency among stakeholders.

2 Communities just like yours are already experiencing significant negative impacts from changing climate conditions. You may look to the 4th National Climate Assessment for more information about these impacts as well.

3 Impacts from climate change will become even more severe in the near- and long-term future. Greenhouse gas pollution already in the atmosphere has locked us into some amount of future warming and increased impacts. If your community is not yet ready to hear that, you can speak in terms of the trends. If the current trends hold, we can expect greater impacts in the future and we need to plan for them.

4 Your community is already adept at adapting to changing conditions. Community planning processes often take into account trends for changes in populations, demographics, economic drivers, etc. This process to build climate resilience is really no different and can provide many other benefits to the community if done in a whole community fashion.

In addition, financial markets are increasingly taking an interest in how well communities are addressing climate related risks. Ratings companies,

Common themes to consider in making your case:

1 Investing in climate resilience now will help us save money and lives in the future

2 Climate resilience planning allows us to prepare for both the risks and opportunities associated with changing conditions

3 Climate resilience strategies create long-term community benefits (economic, environmental, and social) regardless of climate change

such as Moody's and Standard & Poors, are now considering how well communities are addressing climate related risks in their credit rating processes. Green bonds (used to fund environment-friendly projects) are expanding their scope to include adaptation related projects and are finding an increasing investor base. Information about those risks is in the

Engaging Stakeholders

Stakeholder engagement is a common theme throughout the whole process, but there are many ways to do that engagement depending on the roles different stakeholders can and should play in the planning process. You will initially engage the people on your list either one on one or in small groups. In person is better for relationship development, but phone calls will also work. Email is a good way to coordinate after these initial conversations.

Your goals in these conversations are to make sure they know about the planning process and that they will be welcome to participate at various points, and to find out their level of support and desire for engagement. Ask them who else you should talk with and how they and their constituents get information about important topics. Their answers to these two questions will help you build out your stakeholder list and develop an effective public engagement plan.

While the process for identifying stakeholders and recruiting Task Force members seems linear, in reality they are interwoven throughout the project. As you have conversations with stakeholders, remem-

ber that you will soon be recruiting for your Task Force so watch for people who would be good Task Force members.

public domain so these companies know to some degree what risks climate change poses to your community. By showing that you are actively working to address these risks, you will help your community strengthen or protect its credit rating for municipal bonds and other financial instruments that are key to maintaining the health of your community.

Take notes in a structured way so that you can use what you learned when deciding who to invite onto the Task Force, who to invite to workshops, and at other decision points later in the process. It is often helpful to share a one-page informational flyer during these discussions to help convey the need to take action. See sample flyer in Appendix D.

It is often best to start with municipal departments before moving on to informal community leaders in this process. If you do not have strong support for your process within your city government, it is especially important to spend time meeting with various department leaders to make the case internally before taking up the conversation with external stakeholders. When you eventually take it public, citizens will ask these municipal leaders about the need for resilience planning. They need to hear that it is important and valuable, so do not skip your city government leaders and go straight to external stakeholders.

Extra time invested in stakeholder engagement will return big dividends later in the process





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CONSIDER BIAS TRAINING BEFORE REACHING OUT TO UNDER-REPRESENTED POPULATIONS

Make sure under-represented populations can see the results of their interactions with the process and keep the door open for groups to engage in the process if they decline initially.

If you already know you face stiff opposition in some municipal departments, you may want to reach out to external stakeholders whose opinion is valued by those departments and see if they might accompany you. In some cases it will be enough to simply neutralize opposition rather than develop support. Extra time invested in this task will return big dividends later in the process.

You may find that people from low-income communities, communities of color, and Tribal nations do not initially respond enthusiastically to your invitation to be involved in the process. If that is the case, find out why. Is it lack of interest, has trust been broken before or not sufficiently developed, or are there capacity issues that you might be able to accommodate? It may be helpful at this point to review the Spectrum of Engagement developed by the Movement Strategy Center to determine where your process is on the spectrum based on how engagement is structured. This is a good time to make changes in the engagement structure, especially if you are encountering obstacles. Inadequate

time spent engaging under-represented people will weaken the overall plan so take the time to do this work well, even though it may be uncomfortable.

If they are unable to find stakeholders from under-represented populations to participate in the Task Force, it is acceptable to engage with people who advocate on their behalf. Stakeholders can become Task Force members or they can be invited to participate in the community workshops later, but it is important that they be engaged in some fashion so that they do not feel excluded and so that your plan can benefit from their experience and relationships in the community. This is especially true of stakeholders who are not initially supportive of this work. If they do not want to participate, at least see if you can get their permission to share information and keep them up to date as you move through the process.

While you do not need 100% support, you do need a critical mass of people in your community who believe that this is an issue that must be addressed

before you start the planning process in earnest. After talking with several stakeholders, you may find that your community simply is not ready to move into a resilience planning process. If that is the case, step back and start with the community conversation. Help is available for the climate conversation from Resilience Dialogues, a program led by the U.S. Global Change Research Program, the American Geophysical Union’s Thriving Earth Exchange, and the American Society of Adaptation Professionals.

If fractures within your community are so serious that you are not yet able begin the climate conversation, consider taking advantage of the National Civic League’s All-America Conversations Toolkit and Civic Index resources. This toolkit is designed to help communities overcome intense political divides generally and can serve as an effective step-

ping stone to the larger climate conversation. The Civic Index is an additional tool for community assessment of shared values.

In addition, rural communities may find the resources of the Heartland Center for Leadership Development particularly helpful. Their 20 Clues to Rural Survival publication and training workshop can help communities assess their strengths and address weaknesses that may hinder efforts to strengthen general or climate-specific resilience.

An interim step once there is some willingness by the community to consider climate resilience planning is the Resilience Dialogues, a program led by the U.S. Global Change Research Program, the American Geophysical Union’s Thriving Earth Exchange, and the American Society of Adaptation Professionals to help communities start the climate conversation.

Spectrum of Community Engagement to Ownership

Stance towards community	0 IGNORE	1 INFORM	2 CONSULT	3 INVOLVE	4 COLLABORATE	5 DEFER TO
Impact	<i>Marginalization</i>	<i>Placation</i>	<i>Tokenization</i>	<i>Voice</i>	<i>Delegated Power</i>	<i>Community Ownership</i>
Community Engagement Goals	Deny access to decision-making processes	Provide the community with relevant information	Gather input from the community	Ensure community needs and assets are integrated into process & inform planning	Ensure community capacity to play a leadership role in implementation of decisions	Foster democratic participation and equity by placing full decision-making in the hands of the community; Bridge divide between community & governance
Message to community	<i>“Your voice, needs & interests do not matter”</i>	<i>“We will keep you informed”</i>	<i>“We care what you think”</i>	<i>“You are making us think, (and therefore act) differently about the issue”</i>	<i>“Your leadership and expertise are critical to how we address the issue”</i>	<i>“It’s time to unlock collective power and capacity for transformative solutions”</i>
Activities	Closed door meetings Misinformation Systematic disenfranchisement Voter suppression	Fact sheets Open Houses Presentations Billboards Videos	Public comment Focus Groups Community Forums Surveys	Community organizing & advocacy House Meetings Interactive Workshops Polling Community forums	MOU’s with Community-Based Organizations Community Organizing Citizen Advisory Committees Open Planning Forums with Citizen Polling	Community-Driven Planning Consensus building Participatory Action Research Participatory Budgeting Cooperatives
Resource allocation ratios	100% systems admin	70-90% to systems admin 10-30% to promotions and publicity	60-80% to systems admin 20-40% to consultation activities	50-60% to systems admin 40-50% to community involvement	20-50% to systems admin 50-70% to community partners	80-100% to community partners and community-driven processes that ideally generate new value and resources that can be invested in solutions

* This tool was developed by Rosa González of Facilitating Power, in collaboration with Movement Strategy Center and the Building Healthy Communities Initiative, in part drawing on content from a number of public participation tools, including Arnstein’s Ladder of Citizen Participation, and the Public Participation Spectrum created by the International Association for Public Participation



How to Select Task Force Members

Once you have identified and talked with your list of stakeholders, it is time to recruit people to serve on the Task Force. You will have identified potential Task Force members during your stakeholder conversations, so start with that group of people when considering who should serve on the Task Force.

Task Force Member Commitments

- ▶ Regularly attend meetings (generally 1-2 per month)
- ▶ Offer guidance to the process
- ▶ Attend both workshops
- ▶ Connect the process with their local networks
- ▶ Help recruit workshop volunteers
- ▶ Review documents
- ▶ Participate in community engagement events
- ▶ Serve as an informal spokesperson for the process

You are looking for people who share these characteristics:

- ▶ Extensive expertise in a sector core to the planning area or community
- ▶ Well-known and respected
- ▶ Either a formal or informal leader
- ▶ Open to new ideas and information
- ▶ Creative and adept problem solver
- ▶ Good communicator
- ▶ Works well and disagrees respectfully in a group process
- ▶ Authority to implement strategies (decision maker)

A natural tendency is to only appoint people who are already engaged with, and passionate about, climate change. This is a mistake. Successful guidance of the process requires people who have deep



Often people who start out skeptical about climate change become some of the best champions because they can talk with people in the community that climate change advocates might not be able to reach.

We recommend that you find 1-2 representatives for each of these community systems for your Task Force:



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Economic System

Local business and industry leaders, Chamber of Commerce leaders, farmers, government agencies or professors focused on local economic development



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Natural System

Scientists or managers from natural resource agencies, local universities and colleges, and conservation organizations



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Built System

Public works officials, transportation directors, city planners, engineers, and water managers



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Social System

Emergency managers, first responders, doctors, nurses, police, hospital managers, county health staff, vector control, and education



Sagar Dani on Unsplash

Cultural System

Members of communities of color, immigrant communities, tribes, youth, and other formal and informal leaders

knowledge and connections across the community and in the different sectors that are included in the plan. While it is smart to include one climate scientist (from a university, state or federal agency, or NGO), the other members do not need to be already engaged on the issue.

The role of the Task Force is to bring expertise on specific sectors, not to bring expertise on climate change. People skeptical about climate change are often some of the most effective members because they can model for others that skepticism does not preclude effective participation and engagement. Healthy skepticism in and of itself is good for most processes, and even though it might be difficult, it is important to include some people who are somewhat skeptical on the Task Force. The other benefit is that all Task Force members, including initially skeptical ones, will learn quite a lot about climate change in the process.

Also, often people who start out skeptical about climate change end up being some of the best champions because they can talk with people in the

community that climate change advocates might not be able to reach. This is particularly true when you get to the public engagement point in your process. When local leaders who were initially skeptical come out publicly in favor of the plan, it can quickly shift momentum in favor of taking action.

It is important to note the difference between someone who is honestly skeptical about climate change and someone who has made up their mind that climate change is not real. Someone who is skeptical is interested in learning more and is willing to put in the time to have conversations about the topic. You want to avoid recruiting people who have decided that climate change is not real and are not willing to consider new information.

To the extent possible, select people with the above characteristics who are also passionate about addressing climate change. Not all of your Task Force members initially need to be champions, but 2-4 should already understand the issue and be very supportive of taking action.

Accommodating the Needs of Task Force Members

Consider that if your Task Force is truly representative of the community, each member will have different abilities to participate. Find ways to support members by offering stipends, in-kind support or other resources that facilitate their involvement. Many leaders from under-represented populations or young people, for instance, have important perspectives that your Task Force needs, but cannot afford to volunteer their time to participate. Busy or single parents are also difficult to engage, yet many local experts or informal leaders are also parents. Because a wide array of perspectives is vital to developing Whole Community Resilience, consider paying a stipend to Task Force members whose time is not covered by their employers. If

you are not sure what amount is appropriate given the expectations of the position, ask them. Also consider whether offering childcare and holding Task Force meetings at different times would increase participation by certain groups important to the project. These accommodations will cost money that is often difficult to secure from municipal budgets, so think about local foundations or business/civic sponsorships that can help cover these costs.

Including people with different perspectives in the Task Force makes it more likely that the process will identify all important vulnerabilities, synergies, and opportunities to move forward.

Leadership Roles on Your Task Force

Task Force Chair – The Task Force will need an experienced Chair to lead it through the resilience planning process. This person should have experience serving on committees, commissions, or task forces and should know how to run an efficient meeting. Someone who is driven, but diplomatic, and is well-respected across the community is well worth the time it takes to recruit them. It may be that you are the one best suited to take the Chair role.

Whether you serve as the Chair or you recruit someone else, consider recruiting a co-chair for the Task Force. Someone with strong relationships within local government and the community can help increase your capacity. Alternatively, someone from a trusted non-profit organization, such as a social equity or conservation group, could offer a unique leadership perspective and bring buy-in to the process.

Champions – The Champion is the individual who is committed to seeing this effort succeed and has the connections and standing to move it forward. Sometimes it is not obvious who the Champion is

at the beginning, as they can come from any sector and within or outside of local government, but it becomes more obvious over time. These people will serve as powerful public spokespeople. When you are first putting your Task Force together, make sure you see at least two people on your list who you think could be resilience champions.


Youth – Young people have the moral authority as those who will inherit this world, and they typically bring an energy to the team that helps move things forward. They have a right to be at the table when decisions are being made that will profoundly affect their future. Youth Task Force members keep older adults focused and remind them what is really at stake. When you are choosing youth members, be sure to select youth who are active on climate change or other community issues and are willing to speak up around adults. Then make sure they have the same authority on your Task Force as any other member. Often they are more comfortable and contribute more if they are not the only youth on the Task Force, so consider making two slots available for them.



Other Characteristics to Look For

You want people who are comfortable with process, play well (and disagree well) with others, and are not afraid to speak up when they see something going off course. Be careful not to just pick people you know. One of the purposes of the Task Force is to activate a variety of networks across your community.

Finally, be sure to include a balance of men and women, people with different racial or ethnic characteristics, and people who are distributed geographically across your planning area. It is particularly important to get a variety of urban and rural voices in the process if your planning area includes both types of communities.



Be careful not to just pick people you know. One of the purposes of the Task Force is to activate a variety of networks across your community.

First Tasks

Your first few meetings with the Task Force will need to cover many topics. Below are some suggestions.

- ▶ Start your first meeting with some exercises to help them share what matters to them, what they love about the community, and why they care about this work.
- ▶ Make sure members understand their role, which involves attending meetings, reviewing draft documents, participating in workshops, and doing outreach. While not every Task Force member needs to be ready to headline a public forum, they do need to be ready to publicly support the process.
- ▶ Share your draft scope and budget. Have the Task Force make any necessary adjustments so they are committed to seeing it through to completion. Fill in additional details, such as:
 - ▶ specific deliverables
 - ▶ timeline
 - ▶ who the Task Force answers to
- ▶ group decision making processes
- ▶ the plan for implementation (we recommend a hand-off to an implementation team once the plan is complete)
- ▶ whether the task force has authority or is simply an advisory body
- ▶ additional resources to be included in the budget
- ▶ Provide climate change education materials to the Task Force that explain the basics of how climate change works, the difference between climate and weather, why it is such a problem, and the interconnectedness of climate impacts. We recommend credible educational resources at the end of this task.
- ▶ Discuss potential impacts climate change may have on your community. This will help Task Force members start thinking about local impacts, especially those who may be a bit skeptical.

- ▶ Walk the Task Force members through your file sharing system (Google Docs is used frequently for this purpose) and spend some time ensuring everyone understands how to use it.

If you are not experienced at facilitating meetings, we encourage you to explore the facilitation

training resources in Appendix E. Because of the diversity of participants on the Task Force and in the overall process, it is important to be mindful of implicit bias, gender equity, and common facilitation practices that can ensure everyone has an equal voice.

TIPS FOR SUCCESS

Look ahead to Step 2, Task 1. It is often helpful to start early to get onto the schedules of busy scientists, so read ahead and begin to reach out to experts you will want involved in your process. Talk to the climate expert on your Task Force and ask them to read through Step 2 and help you figure out where you will get the information you need.

Some opposition comes just from being left out of a process, so make sure you talk to a wide range of political leaders even if you do not think they agree with you. Talk with them about the importance of protecting your community from natural disasters that are getting worse. For more specific information about how to engage with people who oppose planning for climate change, see the resources at www.climateaccess.org.

Do not assume that just because people from under-represented populations have not been actively engaged in previous planning efforts that this means they are uninterested in this process. There is often quite a lot of history between formal government and under-represented populations and often that history involves broken trust. If you take your time and are genuine in your efforts, you will probably eventually be able to engage these populations.

Properly resource the Task Force. It needs enough staff support so that notes are taken and sent out, meetings are clearly scheduled, and communication is effective. Always send out an agenda before each meeting. Inadequate support and poor preparation for the meetings can cause frustration and stall progress.



OUTPUTS

- A finalized scope and initial budget
- A list of stakeholders with information regarding how they want to be involved in the process and how best to communicate with their networks
- An operational Task Force with diverse perspectives and networks within the community
- A Task Force co-lead
- One or more champions within the Task Force who will act as spokesperson for the planning process
- An information sharing electronic portal
- Completed basic climate change educational engagement with Task Force members
- A completed case statement document or presentation that lays out the need for this process and community investment toward building climate resilience.

RESOURCES

A current list of resources is available on the Climate Ready Communities website:

<https://climatereadycommunities.org/resilience-resources/>

General Resources

All One Sky's Climate Resilience Toolkit (Unit 2) – <http://allonesky.ca/climate-resilience-express-project/>. Request the download near the bottom of the web page, then select Unit 2 from within the kit

Center for Social Ecology and Public Policy – <http://csepp.us/theory/social-ecology-vs-public-relations/> and <http://csepp.us/theory/the-discovery-process/>

Heartland Center for Leadership Development – <http://heartlandcenter.info/clues-to-rural-community-survival/>

National Civic League

Conversations Toolkit – This toolkit helps non-profits and/or municipal staff hold conversations within the community to better understand how to bridge local divides and find ways to move forward. The toolkit includes resources and tips for how to reach beyond the usual suspects, where to hold conversations, how to facilitate a productive conversation (even when things get tense), and how to ensure that your conversation leads to action. <https://www.nationalcivicleague.org/resources/america-conversations-toolkit/>

Civic Index – This tool can help your community assess its shared values, if necessary, prior to having any climate conversation. <https://www.nationalcivicleague.org/resources/civicindex/>

University of Washington's Climate Impacts Group Tribal Resources – <https://cig.uw.edu/resources/tribal-vulnerability-assessment-resources/>

Northern Arizona University's Institute for Tribal Environmental Professionals – <http://www7.nau.edu/itep/main/tcc/Home>

University of Oregon's Tribal Climate Change Project – <https://tribalclimate.uoregon.edu/>

Oregon Climate Change Research Institute's Climate Adaptation Guidebook and resources – <http://www.occri.net/projects/tribal-climate-adaptation-guidebook/>

Resilience Dialogues – www.resiliencedialogues.org/

Appendix D – Sample informational flyer for outreach to potential stakeholders

Education Resources for Your Task Force

NASA – https://www.nasa.gov/mission_pages/noaa-n/climate/climate_weather.html

NASA – <https://www.nasa.gov/audience/forstudents/k-4/stories/nasa-knows/what-is-climate-change-k4.html>

Bill Nye – <http://video.nationalgeographic.com/video/news/101-videos/151201-climate-change-bill-nye-news>

National Academy of Sciences – <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=n4e5UPu1co0>

National Geographic – <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ok8rMT2KCy0>

Annual Support subscribers

Tutorial: Developing Your Task Force

Template: Stakeholder Identification and Taskforce Development Spreadsheet

Template: Task Force Invitation Letter

Subscriber resources for this task are [here](#).

Other Services (available with or without a subscription)

Blocks of consulting time for guidance and document review

Training webinars on climate change, engaging your community, and the Whole Community Resilience approach

Other Services are [here](#)



Photo by M. Koopman

Task 4: Lay the Foundation for Engaging Your Community

This is the time for the Task Force to refine the case you developed in Task 3 for resilience planning — why it is important, what the community will get out of it, and how citizens will be invited to participate.

Assessing Community Attitudes

Despite the fact that there is near unanimous agreement within the climate science community, climate change is still controversial in many places. If you live in such a community, you may find the prospect of engaging the public very intimidating. But you can be successful with advanced planning, Task Force assistance, and collaboration among many different community networks.

It is important to acknowledge where people are on this issue in order to design an effective engagement strategy. In some communities, basic word choices can mean the difference between participation and push-back. An effective approach can be to start the conversation talking primarily about the multiple benefits of building resilience—economic, health, public safety, environmental, etc. Your goal is to meet

your community where it is on the issue and help them make the connection between climate action and their existing vision, goals and needs. Your stakeholder conversations will have provided you with a good sense of where your community is on the issue and how you should communicate about the process.

We have found that fear is often a primary driver of the staunchest opponents of climate action, so stay positive and optimistic to neutralize opposition. Many opponents just want to be heard, so it is important to continue to welcome people and hear their opinions without defending. This is also a critical opportunity for you to better understand your community's concerns and barriers around responding to climate impacts, which is key information for developing effective resilience strategies.

Some questions to consider include:

- ▶ Has any polling on climate change been done in your area, and what does it tell you?
- ▶ Are the public and/or political figures in general agreement on the need to address changing climate conditions or is it a controversial issue? If it is controversial, where is your support base?
- ▶ How does the local media generally treat climate change as an issue?
- ▶ Has there been work on reducing greenhouse gas emissions? If so, is there a high level of support for those efforts? What can be learned from those efforts?
- ▶ Are you concerned that talking about climate change in your community will be met with hostility?

Your answers to these questions will determine how you launch your project in the next phase and how you phrase and rollout various engagement efforts throughout your process.

Your goal is to meet your community where it is and help residents make the connection between climate action and the community's existing vision, goals, and needs.



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TIPS FOR SUCCESS

Remember that your community can be engaged in this conversation, but you may need to focus engagement on local impacts that people already feel and the need to protect them from future impacts (increasing wildfire or heat waves, for example). Polling data shows that there is an increasing number of people in all regions of the country who are concerned about climate change and ready to act. If you start this local conversation in a way they can engage in it, they will have a path to openly support the process.

Be careful about assuming you have more support than is actually present in your community. Even the most progressive communities are often cautious on this topic, and need a high level of outreach effort to stay on board. Because people get information from a variety of different sources, you will need to consistently share the basics of climate change, as well as why the community needs to build resilience.

Conducting a community poll can be a valuable tool to determine the level of support in your community. A scientifically sound poll could be done in collaboration with a local university, non-profit, or other group. Understanding the level of support for climate action in the community can inform messaging and outreach, as well as help with buy-in.

OUTPUT

- An assessment of community attitudes and initial thinking regarding how to approach engagement.

RESOURCES

A current list of resources is available on the Climate Ready Communities website:

<https://climatereadycommunities.org/resilience-resources/>

General Resources

Climate Access provides an extensive network and communication and engagement resources for climate leaders, including resilience planners. The Preparation Frame and Connecting with Conservatives on Climate look specifically at how to frame climate impacts for different audiences. www.climateaccess.org

Yale Climate Opinion Maps provide opinion poll data at the county, congressional district, state, and national levels – <http://climatecommunication.yale.edu/visualizations-date/ycom-us-2016>

Heartland Center for Leadership Development –

<http://heartlandcenter.info/clues-to-rural-community-survival/>

National Civic League

Conversations Toolkit – A tool to help communities have difficult conversations <https://www.nationalcivicleague.org/resources/america-conversations-toolkit/>

Civic Index – A tool to assess shared community values. <https://www.Nationalcivicleague.org/resources/civicindex/>

Resilience Dialogues – www.resiliencedialogues.org/

Annual Support subscribers

Tutorial: Knowing Your Audience

Template: Community Attitudes Assessment

Subscriber resources for this task are [here](#).

Other Services (available with or without a subscription)

Blocks of consulting time for guidance or document review

Other Services are [here](#)



Jack Heesch, FEMA

Task 5: The Kickoff

Hold an event that is open to the public to celebrate the kickoff of your process. The objective for a kickoff is to build community and political support for resilience planning. There are many different ways to hold a successful kickoff event, depending on the culture of your community and current state of engagement and communication on climate change.

Climate change is a more serious topic, with the potential for catastrophic local consequences, making it even more important to bring people together in a positive way, to create hope and optimism, and to connect in a meaningful way that builds relationships. It can be even more complex if you are work-

ing in a community where you cannot openly talk about climate change.

Below are two options for a kickoff in two different types of communities. These are just examples. If your community has its own traditions or culture, be sure to honor those.

The first choice is for communities that are generally supportive of the idea of addressing climate change. The second is more appropriate if your community is more polarized. Large, public kickoff events should only be done where there is significant public support for the process.



Photo by Keith Henty

Kickoff Option 1: Celebrate!

Hold a large, open to the public event to celebrate the kickoff by eating together, sharing thoughts on climate change, and providing ways for your citizens to get inspired and share their thoughts about the process. Climate change can be scary, so you want your event to convey both the importance of tackling the issue head on and the conviction that success is possible if your community is willing to do the work.

Suggestions:

- ▶ Ground the event in local art, music, and stories
 - ▶ Serve good food featuring local restaurants or have a potluck
 - ▶ Invite an inspirational and/or entertaining speaker or performer who can help people feel empowered and energized to take action. Someone who has lived there for a long time and can tell a moving story is a good option.
 - ▶ Limit the amount of time for presentations or individuals speaking
 - ▶ Frame climate change as an issue that affects everyone, especially our health, businesses, infrastructure, water, wildlife, children, etc. Avoid framing it narrowly as just an environmental issue.
- ▶ Create opportunities for people to interact in small groups and with people they do not already know. Be sure to capture their thoughts and share them during the event or in follow-up communications. Find out what they value in the community, what their vision of the future holds, and how they recommend getting there. Many people are scared of climate change at a deep level. This can help them push past their fears and take action.
 - ▶ Gather names and contact information to keep folks up to date. Make a listserve so that you can send updates and announcements of opportunities for public engagement in the process.
 - ▶ Summarize the immediate planning process, with focus on the breadth of community involvement, and explain the timeline, transition from planning to implementation, and the ongoing nature of the process. Let them know how they can be involved in the process.
 - ▶ Make sure that the word gets out widely. Consider outreach at schools, to communities of color, churches, civic organizations, conservation groups, and others. Everyone has a reason to be concerned about climate change and you want all of your citizens to know about the event. Avoid preaching to the choir. Offer



Because of the potential for catastrophic local consequences from climate change, it is important to bring people together in a positive way, to create hope and optimism, and to build relationships.

kids activities and information in other languages to help everyone in your community feel welcome.

- ▶ Use your Task Force members. This is a good time for them to reach out to their networks in the community and invite them to participate.
- ▶ Model responsible climate action by using reusable dishes, limiting printed materials,

and encouraging donations to a local project that will help address climate change

Even if you live in a polarized community, you may be able to hold a large kickoff celebration. It is important to be careful about framing and ask questions related to specific impacts (flooding, larger storms, droughts, etc.) rather than about climate change itself. This is one option.

Kickoff Option 2: Quiet Launch

If you think a big public launch is too risky, however, consider holding a smaller event. Invite the Task Force and the other supportive stakeholders that you identified in Task 2. Use the time to get to know one another and share personal stories about climate change. Find out why people are there and what they have to bring to the process. Finally, be sure to celebrate with food, music, and/or positive stories and

examples. This work can be discouraging, so focus on building connections, enthusiasm, and optimism.

However you do it, you will want to review the scope, timeline, and tasks of the process, and leave some time for social interaction. Relationship development among your Task Force members and stakeholders is an important part of your process.





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TIPS FOR SUCCESS

For the celebration kickoff: Be creative! Find collaborators who know how to put on a really great event. Get students involved. Feature beloved local musicians, artists, storytellers, and others who can bring people together. Eat together. Listen to people. Have a great time!

For the Quiet Launch, mark the occasion by honoring the Task Force members' and/or stakeholders' care for their community and willingness to do the hard work to make the residents safe and the community strong.

Time the kickoff to be after the foundational support work is done with stakeholder and Task Force development, and you have some initial community champions to feature. Look for the caretakers in your community to involve in the kickoff. Faith leaders can be particularly effective.

Think of the kickoff as a way to build awareness, understanding, and commitment to climate resilience. Think through the event from the participant's perspective to ensure that the event meets those goals.

OUTPUT

- A completed kickoff event that formally launches the climate resilience planning process. You and the Task Force are underway!

RESOURCES

A current list of resources is available on the Climate Ready Communities website: <https://climatereadycommunities.org/resilience-resources/>

Annual Support subscribers

Template: Event Signup Sheet
 Template: Sample Agenda – Quiet Launch
 Template: Sample Agenda – Public Launch
 Template: Planning Checklist – Public Launch
 Subscriber resources for this task are [here](#).

Other Services (available with or without a subscription)

Blocks of consulting time for guidance or document review
 Other Services are [here](#)

If you have feedback or ideas about how we might improve this Guide, please contact us at: info@geosinstitute.org.