

STEP

5

Finalize and Share the Plan

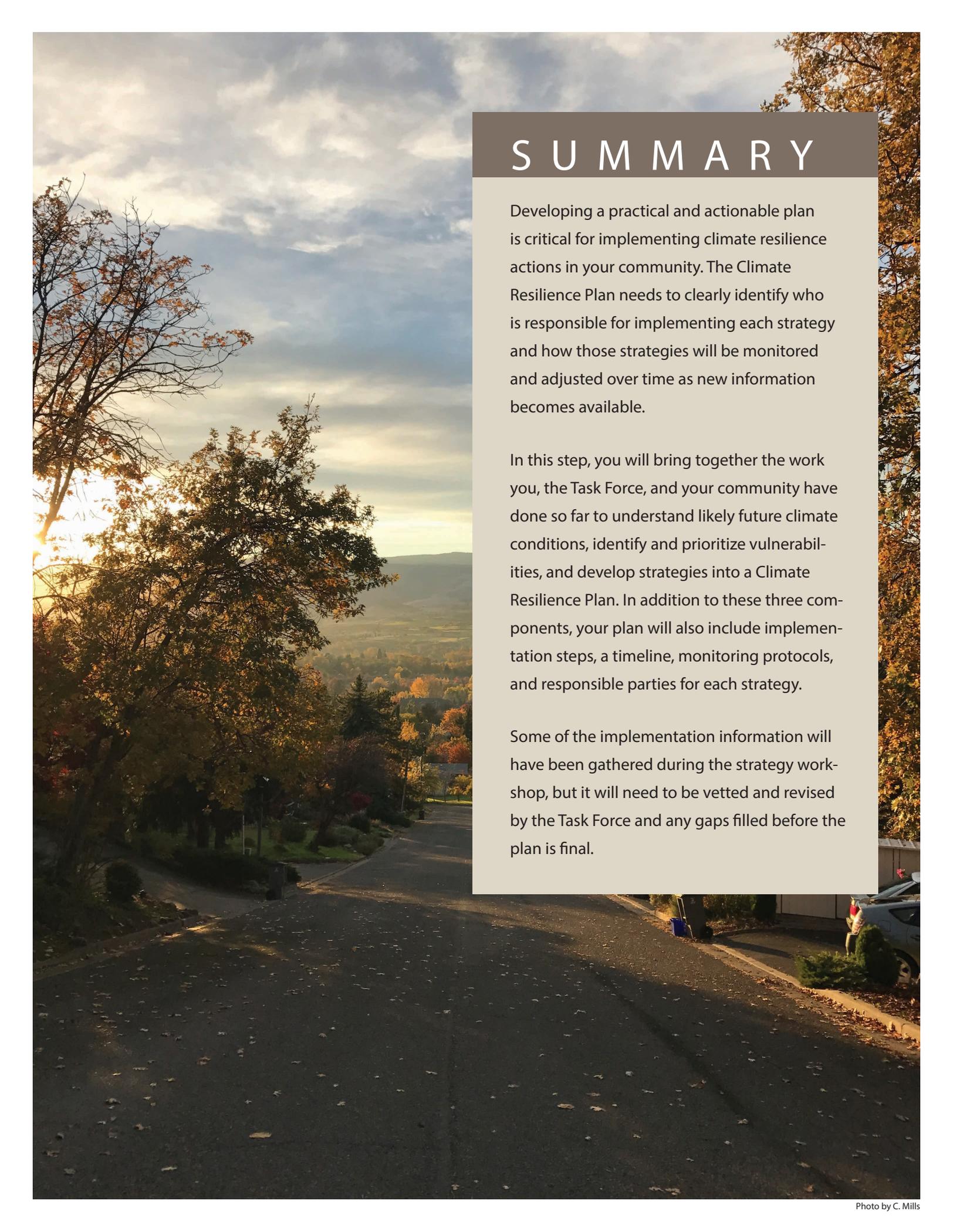
YOUR GOAL

Finalize an inspiring climate resilience plan using the primers, vulnerability assessment, and resilience strategies developed in Steps 2, 3, and 4. The plan will also include clear steps and a timeline for implementation.

Engagement efforts will help generate the community support you need to put the plan into action.

Task 1: Develop the Draft Climate Resilience Plan

Task 2: Finalize the Plan



S U M M A R Y

Developing a practical and actionable plan is critical for implementing climate resilience actions in your community. The Climate Resilience Plan needs to clearly identify who is responsible for implementing each strategy and how those strategies will be monitored and adjusted over time as new information becomes available.

In this step, you will bring together the work you, the Task Force, and your community have done so far to understand likely future climate conditions, identify and prioritize vulnerabilities, and develop strategies into a Climate Resilience Plan. In addition to these three components, your plan will also include implementation steps, a timeline, monitoring protocols, and responsible parties for each strategy.

Some of the implementation information will have been gathered during the strategy workshop, but it will need to be vetted and revised by the Task Force and any gaps filled before the plan is final.

Task 1: Develop the Draft Climate Resilience Plan

Much of what you need to develop in the Climate Resilience Plan has been created by developing the Resilience Strategies Report in the previous step. You will build on that strong base by adding implementation plans and metrics to the chosen strategies to develop the Climate Action Plan. The plan should be positive, engaging, and concise. The people in your community need to be able to see themselves within the Plan, understand why it is important, understand how the goals are achievable, and feel optimistic that the community will succeed.

Develop implementation plans for each strategy

To begin, the Task Force will, over a series of meetings, ensure that the following is identified for each strategy.

- ▶ Desired outcomes – what will happen when the strategy is effective?
 - ▶ The municipal staff, federal/state/county agency or department, school, community organization or other entity responsible for implementation of the strategy.
 - ▶ Other departments, agencies, businesses, schools, or organizations that have a strong interest in implementing each strategy. The likelihood of implementation and success increases with greater interest.
 - ▶ Any policy or rule changes that are needed in order for the strategy to be implemented.
 - ▶ Opportunities for mainstreaming (incorporating the strategy into ongoing plans that are already funded and slated for implementation).
 - ▶ Implementation tools and opportunities that can be leveraged. These include community efforts, such as comprehensive planning, school bonds, transportation and emergency management plans, activities by NGOs, etc.
- ▶ Sample ordinances or models that might be useful.
 - ▶ Timeline for implementation.
 - ▶ Capacity needs for sustained implementation. Identify whether existing staff and resources are sufficient or whether additional resources are needed. It is also important to identify how much funding is needed for each strategy as well as what funding sources are available to provide it.
 - ▶ Potential institutional barriers to implementation, such as existing zoning laws, federal and state policy, or water rights. Reach out to agencies and organizations that can help to make the needed changes.
 - ▶ Ways in which core equity values are to be met in the implementation of the strategy.
 - ▶ Performance or effectiveness measures to be monitored for this strategy. It will be easier to identify measurable outcomes for some strategies than for others, but it is important to make sure that you identify a tracking mechanism for each strategy so that course corrections can be made, if needed. If a strategy is hard to track, such as efforts to reduce the risk of rare or unpredictable events, acknowledge the difficulty in documenting success, but also put monitoring in place to determine effectiveness when those unpredictable events finally occur.
 - ▶ Baseline data that needs to be collected to monitor and adjust the strategy over time.
 - ▶ Triggers – what new information or situations in the future would signal you that the strategy needs to be re-assessed?

You will need to reach out to specific stakeholders and government departments in this phase if they are impacted by a strategy or action for which you are planning implementation steps or if they are expected to help implement it. Their feedback may make it possible to improve the strategy or action so that it is easier to implement and/or more effective. Taking this extra time now can help you avoid public challenges to the strategies included in the plan.

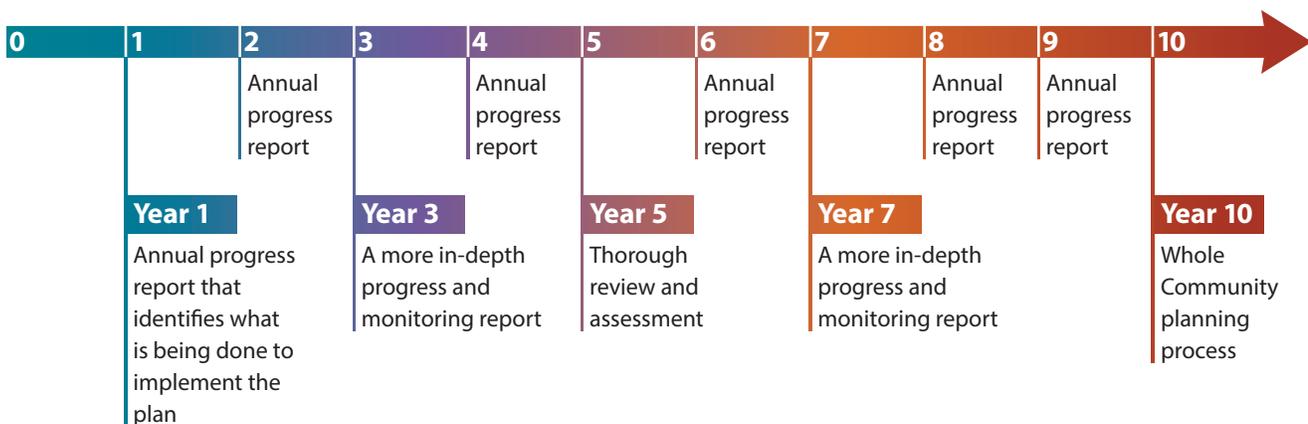
Develop implementation strategy for the plan as a whole

Once all actions and strategies have appropriate implementation and monitoring elements identified, you will identify the following implementation factors for the plan as a whole:

- ▶ **Plan approval and adoption.** Determine next steps for local government approval of the plan (if the scope of your planning effort is a municipality or county). Some local governments pass a resolution or ordinance to mandate plan implementation, which creates more accountability. Ordinances can identify schedules for reporting, require the hiring of a Climate Resilience Officer, and increase consistency when leadership changes take place. A resolution is a good option if you find it difficult to get local government to adopt an ordinance.

- ▶ **Priorities.** Look for some projects that can be implemented right away, with highly visible and tangible benefits. These demonstration projects can help to build local support for the plan as a whole and for less visible resilience efforts. Projects that have many benefits across the community also help to build support and enthusiasm.
- ▶ **Staffing capacity.** It is important that one person be responsible for the overall plan. This person can be employed by the municipality or a civic organization, and is responsible for monitoring progress, reporting to the community, redirecting actions that are not achieving desired results, updating the plan, and continuing community engagement. The person in this role will interact closely with the Implementation Team and provide key coordination assistance along with implementation expertise. Your community may want to hire a Climate Resilience Officer. Small communities may be able to add this role to a new or existing staff position that also has other duties.
- ▶ **Training needs.** There are many people in different municipal organizations who have not been significantly involved in the development of the plan, but are crucial to its implementation. Identify which governmental entities and stakeholders groups need to learn more

Suggested Revision Schedule for Climate Resilience Plans



specifics about the plan and develop a process for quickly getting to a shared general understanding of the plan across these groups.

- ▶ Review and updates.
 - ▶ An annual progress report is recommended to track implementation and keep the community engaged.
 - ▶ Every three years, it is useful to scan for new information to incorporate into your plan and revisit any strategies that are affected by that new information.
 - ▶ Every five years, it will be time for a more thorough review—a formal process of incorporating new data, assessing the effectiveness of resilience strategies, and making course corrections to strategies where needed. This is a time to develop new strategies if new vulnerabilities have become apparent or to shift priorities depending on local circumstances.
 - ▶ At the ten year mark, take your community through another Whole Community resilience update.

Report writing can occur in a variety of ways. You can write the report and get feedback from the Task Force and other stakeholders, the Task Force can take on report writing, or you can create committees to take up certain sections and bring edits back to the Task Force. If the latter is chosen, you may also consider tapping workshop participants who are particularly enthusiastic about remaining involved beyond the workshops. This is a good time to engage the new champions you identified in your workshops and anyone else you and the Task Force members think may be well-suited to serving on the Implementation Team that will soon be formed. In any event, much of what needs to be included in the draft Climate Resilience Plan will have already been written earlier in the process and will simply need to be updated.

EXAMPLE: Climate Resilience Plan Outline

- ▶ Executive Summary/Handout
- ▶ Introduction
- ▶ Vision and Community Values
- ▶ City or County Commitment to the Plan
- ▶ Climate Change Science, Trends, and Projections
- ▶ Cross-sector Vulnerabilities and Strategies
- ▶ Implementation Plan
- ▶ Conclusions
- ▶ Glossary
- ▶ References

Start with an outline of your Climate Resilience Plan (see box) and begin to drop information in from the Resilience Strategy Report and the work done in this task. The plan should include a three to five page Executive Summary that makes the information accessible to people who are not inclined to read a longer document. The vision and community values section comes from the values exercises done in the workshops. You will work with city and/or county officials to determine what should go in the “City or County Commitments to the Plan” section. Cross-sector Vulnerabilities and Strategies includes the specific implementation actions for each individual strategy, while the Implementation Plan section includes the work you have done to identify how the overall plan will be implemented. Feel free to use the glossary in Appendix A of this Guide in your Climate Resilience Plan.

Note that you might want to adjust this schedule such that this process is done a year before the next major local planning effort so that the strategies developed here will be well-positioned to be included in long-term community plans.

- ▶ Performance under other rating systems, such as STAR Communities, the National Flood

Insurance's Community Rating System, or the Global Covenant of Mayors for Climate & Energy. These programs reward communities for actions taken to reduce risk from climate related disturbances. Ensure that you are developing monitoring metrics that will allow you to get credit in these programs for the actions you take as part of your Climate Resilience Plan.

- ▶ Engagement strategies. Building local resilience is an ongoing effort that requires continual investment of community resources, including the personal energy of local citizens. Because of this reality, it is important to build on the solid foundation of community engagement you and the Task Force have laid in this process by developing an ongoing public engagement effort. This effort should

continue to educate, engage, and reinforce positive action toward the goals in the plan. Maintaining a strong engagement process will make it much easier to secure community investment for future implementation actions and help ensure that future revisions to the plan can be done efficiently.

Draft the plan

Develop a draft Climate Resilience Plan for the Task Force to review and edit at least once before finalizing it. The Plan should be positive, engaging, and concise. The people in your community need to be able to see themselves within the final plan, understand why it is important, see how the goals are achievable, and feel optimistic that the community will succeed.





Photo by K. Sauer

TIPS FOR SUCCESS

Look to nonprofits, faith communities, business communities, racial equity groups, and others for capacity to implement resilience strategies, rather than focusing only on governmental action.

Plan to implement a number of early projects that have high visibility and can create engagement opportunities.

It is important to have many of the individuals who will eventually be responsible for implementing specific resilience strategies involved in the development of the strategies as well as implementation components. If key people have not been involved up to this point, invite them in during conversations about implementation.

Embed as many strategies as possible into existing plans and structures (such as Comprehensive Plans, Transportation Plans, School Bonds, Development Plans, County Zoning, Emergency Response Plans, etc.) to ensure that they are funded and implemented.

Remember that different strategies have different time horizons, so they will need to be assessed for effectiveness according to those time frames. For some strategies, you will be able to see immediate results. For others, it may take decades. By ensuring each strategy has a realistic timeframe, you will provide the information needed to assess the effectiveness of strategies as the plan is updated in the future.

Identify the strategies that create important co-benefits across different populations and resources to create opportunities for mainstreaming and pooling available energy and resources.

OUTPUT

- A draft Climate Resilience Plan that is ready to be put before your community prior to implementation.

RESOURCES

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

Annual Support subscribers

Template: Strategy Implementation Spreadsheet
Subscriber resources for this task are [here](#).

Other Services (available with or without a subscription)

Writing and layout of the final Climate Resilience Plan

Blocks of consulting time to:

- answer questions, explain concepts, and provide guidance
- review the draft Climate Resilience Plan

Other Services are [here](#)



Photo by Leah Kelley via Pexels

Task 2: Finalize the Plan

Engaging Stakeholders and Public Officials

Your community engagement efforts are designed to continue to collect feedback and input for the Climate Resilience Plan. They are also intended to continue the education and engagement effort with your community. A successful engagement effort with the plan will help create the momentum needed to move implementation forward successfully.

By this point in the process, you and the Task Force have learned quite a lot about how best to engage stakeholders and the general public on this issue. You will use that information to develop your engagement plan. We recommend that you have some form of electronic presentation of the full draft Climate Resilience Plan with a survey. If you have developed an electronic presentation through the earlier steps in this process, you will simply need to update it for this step.

Engaging the Public

Public forums can be very energizing as long as the need for the resilience work is generally understood and accepted in the community. If you go forward with a public forum, reach out to your stakeholder list and make sure your Task Force members and some local elected officials are prepared to share in the task of being the public face of the resilience planning process. Make sure that the forum is designed to inspire attendees and motivate support. Task Force members should commit to attending and we encourage you to put extra time into ensuring that a significant number of workshop participants are in attendance as well. It is particularly important that you limit the opportunities for forum attendees to “grab the mic” as forums can tend to bring out the

Special events for elected officials to offer feedback can be instrumental in developing and growing support for the plan in the wider community. While some elected officials have likely been involved throughout the process, the completion of the draft plan provides a good opportunity to walk local elected officials through the resilience planning process, share information about future conditions, vulnerabilities, and strategies, and gather their feedback. Given their perspective from the inside of local government, they can often provide invaluable insight on the implementation process. And, as a general rule, elected officials tend to like to have details about things like this before any public forums so that they can be prepared to speak intelligently to the issues addressed in the plan.

two poles of public opinion—those who are deeply committed to addressing climate change and those who are deeply opposed. A good way to handle this forum is to set up tables or “stations” where people can ask questions about each step of the process and the outcome from those conversations.

If you have elements of your community that you believe make a public forum too risky, consider a series of smaller, living room conversations with the stakeholders you identified at the beginning of this process. To the extent that this can include some form of engagement with elected officials, we recommend you move in that direction as local action most often requires the support of local officials.

Final Edits and Local Government Approval

Once you have gathered input from electronic and in person engagement efforts, the Task Force will make any final edits and present the plan to local government for approval. Follow the plan you developed in Task 1 of this step to request approval. In some cases, this plan may have been developed outside the boundaries of city government. However, it will still be most effective if the plan can be approved by a local governing body, especially if local govern-

ment is expected to help implement any of the strategies contained in the plan.

Finally, announce the completion of your plan and share it with other communities via professional networks or adaptation portals, such as the Climate Adaptation Knowledge Exchange or Georgetown Climate Center.

TIPS FOR SUCCESS

While the primary focus at this point is not feedback, you are still gathering input so expect to make some changes between the draft and final versions of your plan based on public and elected official feedback.

The more detailed the implementation strategies, responsible parties, and timelines, the easier it will be to monitor progress and maintain accountability in the implementation process.

There will be excitement in the community to get to work. Capitalize on that by moving through the steps of final report approval at a good pace.

Make the plan concise and graphics rich for engagement with the public and local leaders. Provide clear graphics that can be used in engagement efforts to tell the story of the plan, how people will save money and have better health, and how it sets the community up for success.

Develop that messaging with both your draft and final Climate Resilience Plan.

OUTPUT

- A final Climate Resilience Plan and a community inspired to implement it.

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

RESOURCES

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