

# Climate Smart Communities Profile



City of Rensselaer

March 2014

## Program Overview

The Climate Smart Communities (CSC) program is a New York State initiative to help local communities reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, prepare for effects of climate change and save taxpayers money. The program is designed to address 10 focus areas, or “pledge elements,” outlined in the CSC Pledge: <http://www.dec.ny.gov/energy/53013.html>.

New York State is offering technical support to communities that have adopted the CSC Pledge. This profile provides a stepping stone for identifying a technical support service package to help the City of Rensselaer progress through the 10 pledge elements (see below).

Detailed information on actions completed, in progress, and identified for future action is provided in the tables on the following pages. If a table is missing for a particular pledge element, it means that the CSC program does not have a record of actions taken to address that element.

### Local Government Facts:

**Adopted Climate Smart Communities (CSC) Pledge:** 2009

**CSC Pledge Elements Addressed:** 8 out of 10

**Total Actions Completed:** 11

**Government Type:** City

**County:** Rensselaer County

**Region:** Capital District

**Population:** 9,392

### Climate Smart Communities Pledge Elements:

1. *Pledge to Combat Climate Change by Becoming a Climate Smart Community*
2. *Set Goals, Inventory Emissions, Move to Action*
3. *Decrease Energy Demand for Local Government Operations*
4. *Encourage Renewable Energy for Local Government Operations*
5. *Realize Benefits of Recycling and Other Climate Smart Solid Waste Management Practices*
6. *Promote Climate Protection Through Community Land Use Tools*
7. *Plan for Adaptation to Unavoidable Climate Change*
8. *Support a Green Innovation Economy*
9. *Inform and Inspire the Public*
10. *Commit to an Evolving Process*

## Pledge Element 1: Pledge to Combat Climate Change by Becoming a Climate Smart Community

Action	Status	Description
Adopted CSC Pledge	Completed	Rensselaer adopted the Climate Smart Communities Pledge in 2009.

## Pledge Element 3: Decrease Energy Demand for Local Government Operations

Action	Status	Description
Replaced Windows at City Hall	Completed	Windows were replaced at City Hall for improved energy efficiency.

## Pledge Element 4: Encourage Renewable Energy for Local Government Operations

Action	Status	Description
Solar Panels on Library	Completed	The solar panel installation at the public library helped to reduce the electric bill from approximately \$1,100 to \$400 per month (June 2011).
Solar Panel Installations on Municipal Property	Completed	The City installed solar panels on municipal properties, including: 108 solar panels at the Library in 2010, 104 solar panels at the North End Fire house in 2011, 60 solar panels at the Broadway Fire House and 120 solar panels at City Hall in 2012.

## Pledge Element 5: Realize Benefits of Recycling and Other Climate Smart Solid Waste Management Practices

Action	Status	Description
Offers Recycling to Residents	Completed	Rensselaer has a community recycling program.

## Pledge Element 6: Promote Climate Protection Through Community Land Use Tools

Action	Status	Description
Local Waterfront Revitalization and Land Conservation	Completed	The City released a final draft of the Local Waterfront Revitalization Plan in July 2011.
Waterfront Redevelopment Plan	Completed	Includes design guidelines for riverfront park redevelopment and improvements along the Hudson River
Tree Inventory	In progress	The City is conducting a tree canopy inventory.

## Pledge Element 7: Plan for Adaptation to Unavoidable Climate Change

Action	Status	Description
Green Infrastructure Policy and Projects	Completed	The City adopted a policy that all new developments have green infrastructure components and has implemented a number of green infrastructure projects at City Hall and the local Library.

## Pledge Element 8: Support a Green Innovation Economy

Action	Status	Description
Brownfields Program	Completed	The City has secured 2 assessment (Phase 1) grants from EPA to investigate Brownfield sites in Rensselaer. These include a hazardous waste assessment and a petroleum site assessment. The City has also been awarded a grant through the Brownfields Opportunity Program to focus on a redevelopment plan for the port area.

## Pledge Element 9: Inform and Inspire the Public

Action	Status	Description
Signage for Green Infrastructure Projects	In progress	The City will be installing explanatory signs about the purpose and benefits of the green infrastructure project at City Hall.

## Pledge Element 10: Commit to an Evolving Process

Action	Status	Description
Participate in Regional Stormwater Coalition	Completed	The Rensselaer County Stormwater Coalition is a multi-municipality task force to manage stormwater and maintain a healthy environment. Coalition members include the following municipalities: Brunswick, Castleton, East Greenbush, Nassau, North Greenbush, Poestenkill, Rensselaer, Sand Lake, Schaghticoke, Schodack, and Troy.
Participate in Development of the Capital Regional Sustainability Plan	Completed	The former City Planner participated as the Chair of the Land Use Technical Committee.

**For more information about the City of Rensselaer's climate protection efforts, please contact: Charles Moore at (518) 465-1693**



The Climate Smart Communities Program is jointly sponsored by six New York State Agencies: the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA), Department of State, Department of Environmental Conservation, Department of Health, Department of Transportation, and Public Service Commission.