

BIG IDEA “C” CONCEPT PAPER

Integrating Climate Change Adaptation into Municipal Processes

SUMMIT GOAL: “To launch collaborative actions from regional leaders that will make New England municipalities resilient to climate change.”

Champions: Martin Pillsbury, Metropolitan Area Planning Council, Boston, MA
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Purpose and goal - To Increase the resilience of New England communities by providing resources to support adaptation planning at the municipal and regional level. This will be done through the collection of case examples, peer to peer learning, and sharing at the municipal and/or regional level.

Desired Outcome(s)

- An assessment of the current state of adaptation planning at the municipal level in New England
- A peer to peer sharing across New England of the best practices being used by municipalities for integrating adaptation into municipal planning.
- A collection of real world examples where adaptation is being integrated into municipal planning. These examples would be collected to gather ‘lessons learned and best practices’ to share with others, possibly specific to each state.
- The examples would explore ways: to leverage resources, use data, overcome institutional barriers, identify local champions, and integrate adaptation into municipal process from various perspectives, including emergency planning and hazard mitigation, as well as comprehensive/master, economic development, and/or open space planning, and with web information sharing tools.
- Show how adaptation also helps address “current” hazards as well and makes economic sense in the long run
- Integrate climate change related impacts (and adaptation responses) into municipal decision-making through provision of on-line mapping and scenario building tools that allow users to customize queries to their specific preference/question/situation
- Identify best practices to address “challenges to municipal governance,” including disruption from well organized outside groups, unproductive legal challenges and disputes, and misrepresentation of information.

Scoping Actions:

1. Building on work the states are already doing, do research to find examples and contacts (possible municipal survey?) and collect them in a spreadsheet
2. Development of a template to collect information for case examples; include web addresses; tool functionality; user-identified pros& cons of existing scenario building tools (this last one may be part of #3 below)
3. Review and assessment of examples, teasing out lessons learned and best practices
4. Share findings and lessons through possible gathering or conference call, webinar, website, or list serve

Immediate Actions (low hanging fruit):

- Create spreadsheet to inventory where communities are doing adaptation activities (underway at EPA)
- Demonstration/sharing of models under development among current champions and partners.
- Obtain lessons learned/de-briefs from State/local agencies in NYC, NJ, CT, VT post- Sandy and Irene

- Convene conversations to identify case examples and best practices

Needs: (financing, state/agency resources, data)

- Culvert inventories – costs, methods, status, coordination that works among private, municipal, state agencies
- Funds for stormwater mitigation options, possibly incorporated into community economic development plans
- \$\$ for Inland LiDAR mapping; stream gauges
- Expand/extend storm surge models to include Inland flooding

Partners- potential partners who agreed to help with concept paper, and other potential partners - this may change as the work plan gets developed

Vermont League of Cities and Towns, North Country Council, NH, Upper Valley Lake Sunapee, NH, Two Rivers Ottaqueechee, VT, Pioneer Valley Planning Commission, MA, NH DES, MA DEP, MA DCR, VT DEC, Maine Geological survey, Maine Dept. of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry, USACE, Universities of ME and RI, VHB and Institute for Sustainable Communities? others to be determined

Timeline – if support resources are available

Initial research and collection of examples (Feb. March)

Development of template and case examples (April)

Draft spreadsheet with preliminary lessons and best practices for feedback at Antioch Conference (May)

Possible activities post-May conference: update and maintain database, develop a network for enhanced outreach to municipalities through partners at the States, the regions (RPA's, COG's, counties), and NGO's/CBO's. Share findings and lessons through possible gathering or conference call, webinar, website, or list serve

Linkages to other big ideas

- Big Idea A on vulnerability assessment - methods (successes/challenges) of on-line Climate Vulnerability Assessment tools intrinsically related to this subject
- Also connects to big idea E on communication

Impediments and how to work through them

- Data sharing; institutional silos within DOT – start at the top – DEP Commissioner to MDOT Commissioner
- Ground truthing of data and on-line tools will be needed as well as integration of local knowledge – guidance on this will be important
- Other challenges specific to municipal level work include:
 - How to start the conversation in your town
 - Where to find the information you need
 - Determine what sea level rise scenario and time period to use
 - How to integrate what you find into local plans, policies and programs