

**Climate Smart Communities (CSC) is a network of New York communities engaged in reducing greenhouse gas emissions and improving climate resilience.** CSC is jointly sponsored by the following six New York State agencies: DEC; NYSERDA; Public Service Commission; the Departments of State, Transportation and Health.

Two types of actions enable Climate Smart Communities to minimize the risks of climate change and reduce its long-term costs.

**1. Reducing Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Emissions:** Starting now to reduce GHG emissions and create permanent sinks that remove GHG from the atmosphere; these actions will help stabilize atmospheric GHGs at manageable levels and avoid severe climatic changes.

**2. Adapting to and mitigating negative impacts of climate change** through projects like Ancram's culvert redesign project.

Local governments can play a key role by leading, educating and setting an example of energy efficiency and adaptation. By reducing GHG emissions and preparing for a changing climate, local climate programs protect public health and safety and support a secure economic future.

**In May 2015, the Ancram TB joined several other towns (Cooperstown, Chatham, Hillsdale, Stockport) in passing a Climate Change Resolution** sponsored by Rep. Chris Gibson which commits Ancram to climate friendly practices and behavior and urges residents to follow similar practices.

**A good next step for Ancram is to join the CSC network by adopting the CSC Pledge.**

Formally adopting the Climate Smart Communities Pledge begins a community's commitment to GHG emission reduction and climate adaptation and provides towns with all the elements and steps for a successful local climate program.

6.4 million New Yorkers live in communities that have taken the CSC Pledge. (19 million total population of NY state.) Local examples include the Town and Village of Chatham, the Town of Kinderhook, the Village of Valatie, the Town and Village of Redhook, the Village of Tivoli, the City of Schenectady, and the City of Watervliet.

**Benefits for Climate Smart Communities** CSC receive notification of state and federal assistance to help adopt low-carbon technologies and of programs and support for efficiency improvements and energy conservation. Receive an advantage in accessing some state assistance programs. Get help of other local governments that already have adopted climate smart practices and policies. Statewide recognition.

**Saving taxpayer dollars:** Reducing energy costs and improving operational efficiency will save taxpayer dollars for many years after the initial cost is paid. Climate smart land use practices can lower the cost of infrastructure and public services.

**Improving operations and infrastructure:** Increasing the efficiency of buildings and facilities saves operating dollars and often reduces other air pollutants at the same time, both within facilities and in the community at large.

Ancram has already shown climate leadership by completing the kinds of projects that are noted in the CSC pledge such as completing a Natural Resource Conservation Plan and undertaking the culvert restoration

project. Adopting the CSC pledge would place Ancram at the head of the line to receive more state funding to develop other important land use adaptation as well as energy efficiency and renewable energy projects.

The goals outlined in the CSC Pledge are guidelines for communities moving forward. The CSC Program is designed to be voluntary, flexible, and to support community goals. While there are some advised “first steps”, ultimately it is up to each Climate Smart Community to determine which actions make the most sense both economically and environmentally. Some CSC have focused more on decreasing energy use and GHG emissions, while others which have started by enhancing their climate resiliency.

### **Model CSC Resolution for Community Adoption**

*WHEREAS, the Town/Village/City/County of \_\_\_\_\_ (hereinafter "local government") believes that climate change poses a real and increasing threat to our local and global environments and is primarily due to the burning of fossil fuels; and*

*WHEREAS, the effects of climate change will endanger our infrastructure, economy and livelihoods; harm our farms, orchards, and ecological communities, including native fish and wildlife populations; spread invasive species and exotic diseases; reduce drinking water supplies and recreational opportunities; and pose health threats to our citizens; and*

*WHEREAS, we believe that our response to climate change provides us with an unprecedented opportunity to save money, and to build livable, energy-independent and secure communities, vibrant innovation economies, healthy and safe schools, and resilient infrastructures; and*

*WHEREAS, we believe the scale of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions reductions required for climate stabilization will require sustained and substantial efforts; and*

*WHEREAS, we believe that even if emissions were dramatically reduced today, communities would still be required to adapt to the effects of climate change for decades to come,*

*IT IS HEREBY RESOLVED that Town/Village/City/County of \_\_\_\_\_, in order to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and adapt to a changing climate, adopts the New York State Climate Smart Communities Pledge, which comprises the following ten elements:*

1. Pledge to be a Climate Smart Community.
2. Set goals, inventory emissions, plan for climate action.
3. Decrease community energy use.
4. Increase community use of renewable energy.
5. Realize benefits of recycling and other climate-smart solid waste management practices.
6. Reduce greenhouse gas emissions through use of climate-smart land-use policies.
7. Enhance community resilience and prepare for the effects of climate change.
8. Support development of a green innovation economy.
9. Inform and inspire the public.
10. Commit to an evolving process of climate action.

This Climate Smart Community summary is taken from exchanges with CSC coordinators and from the following NYSDEC web sites: <http://www.dec.ny.gov/energy/50845.html>

<http://www.dec.ny.gov/energy/53013.html>

<http://www.dec.ny.gov/energy/65494.html>