

LOCAL PLANNING FOR CLIMATE CHANGE TOOLKIT AT-A-GLANCE



THE CLIMATE CHANGE TOOLKIT INCLUDES
THE FOLLOWING STEPS FOR LOCAL PLANNING:

- 1** INITIATE & ENGAGE
- 2** UNDERSTAND YOUR VULNERABILITY
- 3** DEVELOP A STRATEGY
- 4** TRACK YOUR PROGRESS



RESILIENT NJ: LOCAL PLANNING FOR CLIMATE CHANGE TOOLKIT

The New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) launched a new climate resilience toolkit, *Local Planning for Climate Change Toolkit*, that guides municipalities through the process of creating a climate change-related vulnerability assessment and developing local climate resilience strategies. Each element of the *Toolkit* will aid municipalities to meet the requirements made by changes to New Jersey's Municipal Land Use Law (MLUL) signed into law by Governor Murphy and the new climate resilience-related Plan Endorsement requirements

adopted by the State Planning Commission. The *Toolkit* was developed as part of Resilient NJ program, DEP's local government resilience planning assistance program. The intended outcome is the creation of local strategies with specific resilience actions tailored to each community's needs. Strategies may include enhanced building and construction standards; retrofitting, elevating, or replacing existing structures and infrastructure; construction of more resilient structures and infrastructure; land use changes; green infrastructure; and many other potential actions.

FOUR STEPS IN THE PLANNING PROCESS:



1

INITIATE AND ENGAGE

Guidance on creating a Planning Team, engaging advisory committees and stakeholders, and creating ongoing opportunities for all members of the public to engage with the resilience and adaptation planning process.

- **Build the Team** – establish a project team that includes a variety of members - from project leadership to the public
- **Developing an Engagement Plan** – focus on considerations for equitable engagement
- **Setting a Vision** – gather community input and create a vision with climate change in mind



2

UNDERSTAND YOUR VULNERABILITY

Guidance on creating a climate change vulnerability assessment.

- **Overview** – includes definitions, minimum state requirements, and helpful tools and data
- **Gather Data** – compile documents, perform build-out analysis, identify assets
- **Self-Assessment** – Vulnerability Assessment Matrix Template
- **Advanced Assessments** – resources for assessing vulnerability to flood and extreme temperature; public health impact assessment

NEW JERSEY PLANNING REQUIREMENTS:

- **The Municipal Land Use Law (MLUL)** was amended in 2021 to require the integration of climate vulnerability assessments into future municipal master plan update. Municipalities are required to include a climate change-related hazard vulnerability assessment in their land use plan elements to analyze current and future threats associated with climate change related natural hazards. The assessment also must include a build-out analysis of all future development in the municipality.
- **Revised Plan Endorsement Guidelines** requires municipalities demonstrate action towards planning for the changing climate. Plan Endorsement offers benefits to municipalities who undergo a voluntary process to have local planning documents and efforts reviewed by state agencies participating on the State Planning Commission.



3

DEVELOP A STRATEGY

Guidance on developing resilience and adaptation actions, which are the individual initiatives, plans, and projects chosen by the community to support increased climate resilience, and compiling complementary actions into a broader resilience and adaptation strategy.

- **Overview** – understand the consequences, and how to brainstorm and encourage innovative solutions
- **Resilience and Adaptation Actions: Capability and Capacity Building** – describes actions related to local planning and regulations, economic tools and incentives, and advancing health and social resilience
- **Resilience and Adaptation Actions: Risk Reduction** – describes actions related to green infrastructure and nature-based solutions and building and infrastructure projects
- **Evaluate the Strategy** – evaluate chosen actions against community needs



4

TRACK YOUR PROGRESS

Guidance on grant and loan opportunities, municipal funding tools, and strategies for implementation.

- **Funding and Finance Options** – grant and loan opportunities from federal and state agencies, private foundations, and other sources; local financing tools such as bonds, taxes, and fees
- **Implementation of Actions** – monitoring tools and approaches, equity considerations, next steps

KEY RESOURCES FROM THE TOOLKIT

EQUITABLE COMMUNITY RESILIENCE ADAPTATION EVALUATION TOOLKIT



The Equitable Community Resilience Adaptation Evaluation Toolkit contains a series of seven worksheets to creating a community-driven planning process inclusive of socially vulnerable populations. The Evaluation Toolkit contains checklists and guiding questions to integrate equity into each step of the planning process (Engagement Plan, Priority Identification, Data Collection, Co-Development of Solutions, and Action Evaluation).

RESILIENCE LIBRARY



The Resilience Library contains a full list of 100+ reports, online web tools, trainings, worksheets, and templates that communities can use throughout the planning process, sorted by when its most appropriate for use in the planning process. These resources are linked throughout the toolkit where applicable.

LOCAL ACTION MATRIX



*Construction of the Northwest Resiliency Park,
Hoboken, NJ*

The Local Action Matrix contains almost 300 resilience and adaptation action examples from around the country meant to provide municipalities with a robust and easy-to-use database of example actions they can take to combat climate change in their communities. Individual PDF summaries are available for each action category (Local Planning & Regulations, Economic Tools & Incentives, Advancing Health & Social Resilience, Green Infrastructure & Nature-Based Solutions, Building & Infrastructure Projects) which explain what climatic conditions, natural hazards, and negative human and environmental impacts each action will protect against.

To view the Toolkit, visit: <http://resilient.nj.gov/guidance>

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