



Governor Cuomo names 16 new Certified Climate Smart Communities

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Albany, NY Governor Andrew Cuomo named a record number of awardees for the Climate Smart Community Certification program, including the city of Buffalo and Erie County. In total, 16 local governments were recognized for successfully meeting Climate Smart criteria as climate leaders today, after more than 445 action submissions were received from communities across the state. This announcement at the Buffalo Museum of Science is part of the state's weeklong celebration of Climate Week and supports the Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act, part of the state's Green New Deal to achieve a carbon-free electricity system by 2040, and 85% reductions in greenhouse gas emissions by 2050.

"Achieving the goals New York's nation-leading plan to fight climate change will only be possible if the state and local governments work together to reduce emissions and protect our communities. That is why we are continuing to partner with municipalities through this successful initiative," governor Cuomo said. "I congratulate these 16 communities for taking bold actions and enacting ambitious policies to address climate change and build a clean energy economy at a very local level."

The 16 new certified Climate Smart Communities are listed by region below:

Capital District: City of Albany and city of Watervliet;

Long Island: City of Long Beach;

Mid-Hudson: Town of Bedford, Dutchess County, Orange County, village of Piermont, village of Pleasantville, town of Red Hook and town of Saugerties;

Southern Tier: Broome County, town of Caroline, town of Dryden, and village of Montour Falls; and

Western New York: City of Buffalo and Erie County.

This event at the Buffalo Museum of Science brings special attention to the accomplishments of the city of Buffalo and Erie County. Buffalo's Green Code is an excellent example of climate-smart land use: The city has installed electric vehicle charging stations throughout the city and improved infrastructure for biking and walking. As part of shifting to clean, renewable energy, the city has also installed solar photovoltaic arrays at 17 different municipal facilities.

Erie County is focused on climate action as evident through their commitment to conducting local

inventories of greenhouse gas emissions, installing electric vehicle charging stations, and implementing methods to decrease energy use in their buildings. As part of evaluating their climate adaption capacity, Erie County created an online natural resource inventory and is working within the community by actively supporting the WNY Sustainable Business Roundtable and working with stakeholders on the Erie County Community Climate Change Task Force.

New York's Climate Smart Community (CSC) program is jointly sponsored by the State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC), the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA), Department of State, Department of Health, Department of Transportation, and the Department of Public Service. The CSC program helps local governments reduce greenhouse gas emissions and adapt to a changing climate, while offering free technical assistance, grants, and rebates for electric vehicles.

Started in 2009, the CSC program provides guidance and technical support to local governments to take locally driven climate action. Currently, there are 277 registered Climate Smart Communities, representing more than eight million New Yorkers. These registered communities have taken the first step toward certification by pledging to reduce emissions and adapt to climate change. The certification program was launched in 2014 to document and celebrate the accomplishments of leading communities. Since 2014, New York State has designated 37 certified Climate Smart Communities.

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