



Frequently Asked Questions

Where is the funding for this project coming from?

While the grant for the project comes from the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA), the source of the funding is the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative.

The Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI) is a regional initiative by nine northeastern states to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Put simply, RGGI is a cap-and-trade system for CO₂ emissions from power plants in the member states. Emission permits are auctioned and the proceeds are disseminated to the member states to promote energy conservation, renewable energy, and greenhouse gas emissions reductions.

What are the origins of the Regional Sustainability Plan?

The Regional Sustainability Plan is a deliverable associated with Phase I of Governor Cuomo's Cleaner, Greener Communities program. The Cleaner, Greener Communities program has two phases: Phase I is focused on planning and Phase II is focused on implementation. The planning phase of the program is intended to provide the necessary resources for each region in New York State, as defined by the boundaries of the Regional Economic Development Councils, to develop a comprehensive sustainability plan. Engaging in the planning process will allow each region to develop its vision and goals for a sustainable future and to identify the activities or types of projects needed to achieve that future.

What are the objectives of the Plan?

The Capital Region Sustainability Plan will inform municipal sustainability and land use policies, serve as a basis for local government infrastructure decision making, guide infrastructure investment of both public and private resources, outline specific and tangible actions to reduce greenhouse gas emissions consistent with New York State's goal of 80% carbon reduction below 1990 levels by the year 2050, and identify strategies for adapting to the effects of climate change.

Continued on back

What will be included in the Capital Region Sustainability Plan?

The Sustainability Plan will provide an overview of the current state of the region in regards to meeting certain sustainability indicators in each of eight focus areas:

- Climate Adaptation
- Economic Development
- Energy
- Food Systems
- Land Use and Livability
- Transportation
- Waste
- Water

Each focus area will have its own chapter in the Plan detailing goals, targets, initiatives to meet those goals, and implementation strategies for those initiatives.

Additionally, a baseline assessment and Regional Greenhouse Gas Emissions Inventory will be included in the final Plan.

What will happen after the Regional Plan is finalized?

In Phase II of the Cleaner, Greener Communities program, the implementation stage, funding will be provided on a competitive basis for the implementation of specific projects identified in the plan. Criteria for funding include reducing greenhouse gas emissions, increasing energy efficiency, and promoting the deployment of renewable energy projects. Another consideration in the competitive funding process: furthering each region's progress toward the goals established by both the sustainability plans developed through this program and the strategic plans developed by their Regional Economic Development Councils. Phase II will be rolled out over the next three years (\$30 million a year) starting in March of 2013 when all regions have completed their plans.

How can I participate in the process?

The first round of public workshops took place in late July, and the online open house will run through August 31. Anyone can participate in the online open house by contributing ideas, comments, and proposals (www.sustainablecapitalregion.org). A second round of public workshops will take place around the region in late September or early October, followed by another opportunity to contribute online. Finally, the Plan will be disseminated in early December for public review and comment. Once the Plan is finalized, decisions about applying for funding and implementing projects will occur at the local level.

How can I stay plugged in as the process moves forward?

You can visit the website (www.sustainablecapitalregion.org) anytime for information. You can sign up on the website to receive email updates on upcoming public input opportunities, decisions, and the like.