Climate Smart Communities Certification

A High-Impact Action for the Clean Energy Communities Program

Communities and Local Government Team at NYSERDA

Clean Energy Communities Program

Provides **rewards and recognition** to city, town, village, and county governments that demonstrate clean energy leadership

STEP 1: Earn the **Clean Energy Communities** designation by completing **4 out of 10 high-impact actions**

STEP 2: Access **grant funding**, up to $250K with no local cost share, to support additional clean energy projects

Dedicated and knowledgeable local coordinators are available to assist communities as they implement high-impact actions i.e. free on-demand technical support, decision support, step-by-step guidance, case studies, model ordinances, RFPs, etc.

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10 High-Impact Actions

1. Benchmarking
2. Clean Energy Upgrades
3. LED Street Lights
4. Clean Fleets
5. Solarize
6. Unified Solar Permit
7. Energy Code Enforcement Training
8. Climate Smart Communities Certification
9. Community Choice Aggregation
10. Energize NY Finance

Climate Smart Communities Certification

- The Climate Smart Communities Certification (CSC) program provides local governments with a robust framework to guide their climate action and enables high-performing communities to achieve recognition for their leadership.
- Designed around the CSC pledge elements, the certification program recognizes communities for their accomplishments through a rating system leading to four levels of award: Certified, Bronze, Silver and Gold.

Requirements

Demonstrate completion of the Climate Smart Communities Certification action by submitting the following documentation:

- Submit documentation that demonstrates your community has been listed as a Certified Climate Smart Community at the certified, bronze, silver or gold level on the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC) website.

Why Get Certified under the CSC Program?

- Reduce GHG emissions
- Save taxpayer money
- Build a more resilient & attractive place to live
- Get organized and build capacity
- Better positioned for funding
- Recognition of leadership

CSC Certification Levels

Award Level	Points (Out of 875 possible)	Logo
Registered CSC	4	NEW YORK STATE OF OPPORTUNITY. Climate Smart Communities
Certified CSC	120	NEW YORK STATE OF OPPORTUNITY. Climate Smart Communities Certified
Bronze	250	NEW YORK STATE OF OPPORTUNITY. Climate Smart Communities Certified Bronze
Silver	350	NEW YORK STATE OF OPPORTUNITY. Climate Smart Communities Certified Silver
Gold	450	NEW YORK STATE OF OPPORTUNITY. Climate Smart Communities Certified Gold

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Action 6.11 Install electric vehicle charging equipment (8 points).

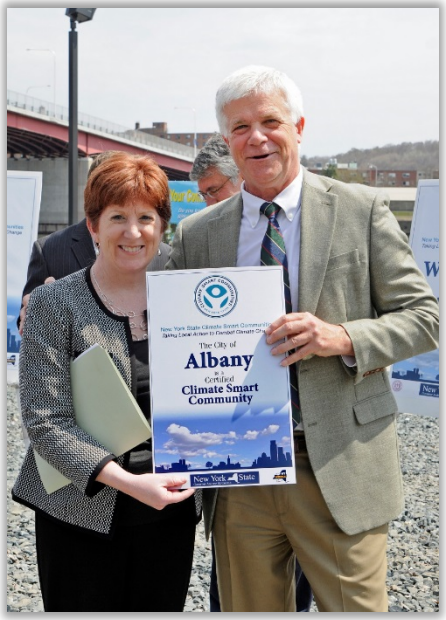
How do you earn points?

- 1-10 points per action
- Over 120 total possible actions
- Wide range of action types: planning, policies, outreach, implementation, etc.

Steps to Achieving CSC Certification

1. Designate a project coordinator and contact your regional support contractor
2. Review the CSC Certification First Steps Guide at http://www.dec.ny.gov/docs/administration_pdf/firststepscsc.pdf
3. Use the CSC Certification Workbook for self-assessment and tracking progress
4. Consult the CSC Certification Manual for the full details on each action you plan to pursue
5. Collect the required documentation in the CSC Certification File Folders
6. Submit your completed Workbook and documentation to climatechange@dec.ny.gov

Case Study – City of Albany



Examples of the City's focus on land-use and resiliency:

- **Action 6.1**: Comp. plan w/ sustainability elements (9 pts)
- **Action 6.9**: Complete streets policy (4 pts)
- **Action 6.12**: Improved public transit ridership (10 pts)
- **Action 7.1**: Climate change vulnerability assessment (8 pts)
- **Action 7.4**: Climate adaptation strategies (5 pts)

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Tools and Resources

Climate Smart Communities Certification First Steps Guide

This guide provides brief descriptions and the documentation requirements for each of the 13 certification priority actions, as well as tools and resources available to assist in completion of those actions.

Climate Smart Communities (CSC) Certification Manual

The CSC Certification Manual describes more than 130 individual actions for which a community may earn points toward certification.

Climate Smart Communities Workbook

This excel spreadsheet provides a format for documenting actions taken to achieve certification.

Technical Support

Dedicated and knowledgeable local Clean Energy Coordinators are available to help municipal officials implement Benchmarking. To access this support, please send an email to cec@nyserda.ny.gov

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The Bottom Line

Local government officials that implement Climate Smart Communities Certification can expect to:

- ✓ Develop a comprehensive environmental program
- ✓ Create a healthier, more vibrant community
- ✓ Reduce the carbon footprint 80 percent by 2050

Contact

Communities and Local Government
New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA)
Email: cec@nyserda.ny.gov

www.nyserda.ny.gov/cec

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