

CLIMATE SMART COMMUNITIES
ANNUAL PROGRESS REPORT
for the
VILLAGE OF DOBBS FERRY

2023



prepared by the CSC Task Force of Sustainable Dobbs

December 2023

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BACKGROUND

New York State Climate Smart Communities Program

Climate Smart Communities (CSC) is an inter-agency New York State program that supports local governments in leading their communities to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, adapt to the effects of climate change, and promote green economies. The program is administered by the Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC), and jointly sponsored by DEC together with the NY State departments of health; public service; and transportation, as well as the Energy Research and Development Authority and New York Power Authority.

The CSC program offers numerous benefits for its more than 400 registered members, including invaluable support and technical assistance from regional coordinators, as well as opportunities for capacity building and for funding.

To take part in the CSC program, municipalities must first adopt the CSC Pledge. They can then work towards CSC certification by carrying out specific CSC activities.

Dobbs Ferry: A Climate Smart Community

The Village of Dobbs Ferry recognizes that the world is experiencing a climate crisis. We are committed to strengthening our own response to it through the Climate Smart Communities (CSC) program, for the benefit of our community, our state, and the larger world beyond.

When the program began in 2014, Dobbs Ferry was one of only two municipalities in New York State certified as a silver level community. As of year-end 2023, the Village is one of 122 local governments with a bronze level certification. (This certification is based on its 2020 submission for recertification and will expire in 2025.)

[Sustainable Dobbs](#), (SD), whose members are appointed by the Dobbs Ferry Board of Trustees, has served as a focal point for the Village's engagement with the CSC program. In 2023, SD identified alignment with the program as a priority and set out to update documentation of relevant activities already undertaken, as well as to encourage and/or carry out new actions to improve the Village's performance. This report describes the results of these efforts and includes actions taken not only by SD but also Village staff and additional boards, key stakeholders, and residents.

The activities described herein will be submitted to the CSC program's portal on January 5, 2024, with the goal of being redesignated as a silver level Climate Smart Community, currently the highest level of certification available.

2023 HIGHLIGHTS

In December 2023, in consultation with the Hudson Valley Regional Council, the Village prepared updated Government Operations GHG and Community GHG Inventories. These established a 2019 baseline for greenhouse gas emissions and identified the largest energy users and sources of these

emissions. The two inventories will now allow Dobbs Ferry to measure the impacts of both municipal and community activities since 2019. They will also provide an evidence base to guide our efforts in 2024 and beyond. For example, focusing on the built environment and transportation sectors for the community and on Village facilities and fleet/equipment for the government. In 2024, Dobbs Ferry will work to set emission reduction targets and to update our Climate Action Plan accordingly.

In November 2023, the Dobbs Ferry Board of Trustees established a CSC sub-committee of Sustainable Dobbs, to be known as the CSC Task Force. This task force will be dedicated to planning, monitoring, and evaluation, as well as coordination with the Village and key stakeholders, to ensure continuous alignment with the CSC program, thus ensuring the sustainability of these efforts.

SUMMARY OF ACTIONS IN THE CLIMATE SMART COMMUNITIES PROGRAM

This annual report describes the CSC actions that the Village has accomplished and/or updated since its previous certification in 2020. As the Village's first-ever annual CSC report, it further seeks to provide a historical record of actions that may have been taken even earlier.

The report is organized according to the CSC program's 12 Sections: 10 Pledge Elements (PEs), Innovation, and Performance.

PE1 Build a climate-smart community

CSC Task Force: The Board of Trustees adopted Resolution 211-2023 on November 15, 2023, establishing a NYS CSC sub-committee of Sustainable Dobbs, known as the CSC Task Force, strengthening the work of SD going forward. The Resolution outlines the Terms of Reference and Powers + Duties of the new CSC Task Force.

CSC Coordinator: The Board of Trustees adopted Resolution 212-2023 on November 15, 2023, appointing Janet Roseff as CSC Coordinator of the CSC Task Force, a voluntary position for the purpose of fulfilling the necessary requirements related to being a Climate Smart Community.

National/Regional Climate Program: Dobbs Ferry has been an active partner with Sustainable Westchester, a nonprofit consortium of Westchester County local governments that facilitates effective collaboration on sustainability initiatives. The 2023 campaigns in which the Village participated include the EnergySmart HOMES campaign and GridRewards, where the Rivertowns Mayors took the challenge to garner the most residential sign-ups. [LINK](#)

The Village is also an active participant in NYSERDA's Clean Energy Communities (CEC) program, and has completed many of its high-impact actions. The most recent actions, in 2023, are:

- Clean Heating and Cooling, (for reaching a target number of residents who installed heat pumps in their homes and for which the Village was awarded a \$5,000 grant).
- LED Street Lights (for converting nearly all of the Village's exterior decorative and cobra-head street lights to LED),
- Clean Heating and Cooling Demo (for the installation of new heat pumps in Village Hall, now 100% electric), and

- Clean Energy Upgrades (for the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions due to the Village Hall upgrade and the solar panels on the Embassy Center roof).

Partnerships with Other Entities: Dobbs Ferry has taken a lead role in convening and collaborating with other DF organizations, local businesses, regional sustainability groups, local institutions, and neighboring municipalities in a wide range of sustainability and climate-related initiatives.

Some recent examples in 2023 include the following:

- Greenburgh Nature Center, Children's Village, Roots & Wings, The Masters School, and local businesses for Dirt Fest 2023 - an annual Dobbs Ferry Earth Month celebration to encourage sustainable practices.
- Pace University Land Use Law Center - currently participating in a community planning process to develop a resiliency assessment and prepare waterfront revitalization program components.
- Hudson Valley Regional Council - currently in process with their cohort to develop an updated GHG Inventory for both community and government operations in Dobbs Ferry.
- Sustainable Westchester - participating in the EnergySmart HOMES campaign and the Mayor's Challenge for GridRewards (as described above).
- Other municipalities - collaborating on a number of local initiatives, like the Rivertowns Repair Cafe (promoting reuse) and Rivertowns Restaurant Crawl (promoting local businesses), as well as working together to seek out various grant opportunities (the latest effort reaping a grant award for forest regeneration in Southern Westchester).

In December of this year, the Hudson Valley Regional Council honored Dobbs Ferry, along with 7 other Rivertowns, for its inaugural Building Bridges Award, recognizing municipalities that demonstrate a significant commitment to collaboration and partnership. [LINK to HVRC](#)

PE2 Inventory emissions, set goals, and plan for climate action

Government Operations GHG Inventory: In December 2023, in consultation with the Hudson Valley Regional Council (HVRC), the CSC Task Force prepared an updated greenhouse gas (GHG) inventory for village-owned buildings. The GHG inventory establishes a GHG emissions benchmark using a baseline year and identifies the largest energy users and sources of GHG emissions (e.g. by building, sector, or department). As a result, GHG inventories help local governments select actions that offer a good return on investment and should be highlighted in subsequent climate action planning. [LINK to SD RESOURCES](#)

For baseline year 2019, GHG emissions from Dobbs Ferry government operations totaled 1,091 MTCO₂e. Administration facilities account for the largest contributor of GHG emissions at 49%. The second largest contributor is the Dobbs Ferry vehicles and equipment with 38% of emissions. Streetlights (which includes park and other outdoor lighting) along with Dobbs Ferry's three water pump stations make up the remaining 13%.

Community GHG Inventory: Similar to the Government Operations GHG Inventory, the CSC Task Force also completed an updated Community GHG Inventory in December 2023, in consultation with HVRC. The community GHG inventory is an accounting, analysis, and report of the GHG emissions resulting from transportation fuels, waste, energy usage in buildings, and other sources

within a given geographic boundary. Understanding the sources of GHG emissions and establishing a GHG baseline are critical first steps in the local climate action process. [LINK to SD RESOURCES](#)

For baseline year 2019, Dobbs Ferry's GHG community-wide emissions totaled 112,170 MTCO₂e, (over 100 times the emissions from government operations). The built environment (residential, commercial, and industrial) accounts for 47% of these overall emissions, with the commercial sector comprising 56% of that figure (due to the large non-profit institutions that fall within this category). The second largest contributor is transportation contributing to 40% of the overall emissions total.

Community Climate Action Plan: A climate action plan (CAP) is a strategy document that sets goals and outlines a set of initiatives that reduce GHG emissions. Using a GHG emissions inventory as the foundation, a CAP defines GHG reduction targets and identifies priority actions. The Village had submitted a CAP, dated September 26, 2017, in its previous CSC certification process, and it has been approved. With the new GHG Inventories now complete, the CSC Task Force will begin the process of updating the CAP in 2024. [LINK to SD RESOURCES](#)

PE3 Decrease energy use

Government Building Energy Audits: In July 2021, Honeywell Building Solutions conducted a feasibility study for all the major government-owned buildings in the Village and provided a detailed analysis and recommendations on energy saving opportunities. From the auditing that resulted in this process, the Village identified priority upgrades and entered into an Energy Performance Contract with the company that will decrease the GHG emissions across all buildings. Much of this work has already been implemented and is described below. The remaining work will be completed in 2024.

Interior Lighting Upgrades: As part of the Energy Performance Contract with Honeywell, the Village has performed LED interior lighting upgrades in all of its major government-owned buildings. Installation was completed on January 25, 2023.

HVAC Upgrades: In 2018, Dobbs Ferry received two separate grants from the state for HVAC upgrades to the Embassy Community Center, enabling it to become a NYS heating and cooling center for the Village. Upgrades included:

- Central AC
- New energy-efficient boiler
- Generator for back-up power
- New electrical service, with upgrades in wiring and feeds
- New outlets for charging stations
- Awning over back patio

In 2023, as part of Honeywell's Energy Performance Contract, major HVAC upgrades took place at Village Hall. This work included:

- Condensing unit replacements
- New variable flow heat pumps
- New domestic hot water heater

The building is now 100% electric and is projected to see a reduction of GHG emissions by an estimated 51 metric tons of CO₂ per year.

In 2024, Honeywell will complete its contract at Village Hall by replacing the roof, windows, and glass entrance wall at the back, providing insulation for pipes, and installing rooftop solar panels with a capacity of 25.9 kW.

Building Energy Management System: Currently, there is a Building Energy Management System controlling the HVAC in both the Public Library and the Embassy Community Center. The Library's crucial role as a Village cooling center made it necessary to update the existing system in 2022 to better serve the community. In addition, as part of the Energy Performance Contract, Honeywell installed energy management controls for lighting (occupancy sensors) in both the Village Hall and the DPW building, completed in 2023.

In 2024, Honeywell will be installing a new village-wide system that will allow for the control of the mechanical systems in all Village-owned buildings from one central location.

Benchmarking – Municipal Buildings: Buildings account for about 32% of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions in New York State. Building energy benchmarking involves tracking energy use, measuring performance over time, and comparing building performance against similar buildings and against expected performance under the same climatic conditions. Chapter 214 of the current Dobbs Ferry Village Building Code, entitled Municipal Building Energy Benchmarking, was adopted into the Code on Nov 22, 2016 and requires yearly benchmarking reports to be conducted and posted online for the general public. Our latest published Report was for 2020. [LINK](#)

The CSC Task Force is working to help enter the information for the years from 2021 to the present and to ensure that these reports are available online. Benchmarking also serves as a qualifying New York State Clean Energy Communities (CEC) Program Action and during 2021, the Village completed "Advanced Benchmarking" under the CEC program.

Clean Energy Upgrades: The Village of Dobbs Ferry has actively worked to reduce GHG emissions from facilities that are owned by the municipality. The most recent examples include the heat pump installation at Village Hall, completed this year, eliminating the building's need for fossil fuels. The Embassy Community Center has recently installed solar panels on its roof, meeting approximately 70% of the building's electrical needs. These two projects alone yield a 12.6% reduction of GHG emissions. This also serves as a qualifying NYSEDA Clean Energy Communities (CEC) Program High-Impact Action, for which the Village has earned points this year.

Fleet Inventory: By creating a fleet inventory and updating it regularly, local governments can identify which vehicles are the least fuel-efficient and develop a plan to replace them with vehicles that serve the same function but are more efficient. *(The difference between 25 miles per gallon and 20 miles per gallon can amount to the prevention of 10 tons of carbon dioxide over a vehicle's lifetime, according to the US EPA.)* The Dobbs Ferry DPW has updated the existing Fleet Inventory this year to reflect the NYS requirements. Updates to the inventory will be made by the DPW as new vehicles are purchased and old ones are retired.

LED Street Lights: As part of the Honeywell Energy Performance Contract and completed in 2023, over 96% of the Village's decorative and cobra head street lights have now been converted to LED. This also serves as two separate qualifying NYSEDA Clean Energy Communities (CEC) Program High-Impact Actions, one for cobra head fixtures, for which the Village earned points in 2016, and one for decorative fixtures, for which the Village earned points this year.

Financing Mechanism for Government Energy Projects: In 2021, the DF Board of Trustees adopted Resolution 174-2021 whereby it authorized Honeywell to conduct a comprehensive energy audit of all the major village-owned buildings. With this audit, Honeywell provided the Village a cost analysis for energy savings and identified practical Energy Conservation Measures that meet the Village's constraints and economic criteria. The projects total \$3,995,000.

The Village financed the project costs for the Energy Performance Contract (EPC) with the Bank of America over a 20-year term under the Lease/Purchase Documents. This EPC provides that Honeywell will guarantee a savings for the fully-implemented energy conservation measures or they will compensate the Village for the shortfall. Results will be analyzed on an annual basis.

Energy Code Enforcement Training: The focus of this action is on educating local compliance officials about energy code best practices. At least one code official must complete a NYSERDA-approved Energy Code Enforcement Training series, including both residential and commercial workshops. Since buildings represent roughly 60 percent of New York's total energy consumption, there is significant opportunity for energy savings and reduced GHG emissions through improved Energy Code compliance. The Dobbs Ferry Building Inspector and one other building department employee completed the requisite 4 hours of residential and 4 hours of commercial training in White Plains this past spring 2023. This also serves as a qualifying NYSERDA Clean Energy Communities (CEC) Program High-Impact Action, for which the Village earned points in 2022.

PE4 Shift to clean, renewable energy

Heat Pumps: As a result of the Feasibility Study and subsequent Energy Performance Contract, Honeywell installed heat pumps throughout Village Hall in 2023, eliminating the need for natural gas use in the building. This also serves as a qualifying NYSERDA Clean Energy Communities (CEC) Program High-Impact Action, for which the Village has earned points this year.

Solar Energy Installation: The Village has previously installed solar panels on the roofs of 3 existing public properties: the DPW garage, the Public Library, and the Embassy Community Center. In spring of 2024, through Honeywell's Energy Performance Contract, solar panels will be installed at a 4th property: the Village Hall.

The nameplate capacities of the systems completed to date are as follows:

- DPW - installed 2011 - 48.96 kW
- Library - installed 2011 - 18.48 kW
- Embassy - installed 2020 - 23.015 kW
- TOTAL = 90.455 kW

PE5 Use climate smart materials management

Recycling Bins for Government Buildings: Although recycling bins have been provided within government buildings for years, there was no formal policy or executive memorandum issued. The CSC program requires such documentation. An executive memorandum was formally adopted by the Board of Trustees on Dec 12, 2023.

Construction + Demolition Waste Policy: In the Village Zoning Code, Chapter 258-8 Construction Debris, it describes that the Village is prohibited by the NYS DEC from collecting and disposing of construction debris. Debris and waste materials which result from the construction or alteration of private properties shall not be included with refuse, trash, or recyclable materials collected by the

DPW. Property owners and contractors shall be fully responsible for the proper disposal of such materials.

Recycling Program for Public Places + Events: Dobbs Ferry has always been a proactive supporter of recycling initiatives. This year, as part of Sustainable Dobbs' year-long DeWaste Dobbs campaign, the Zero Waste Committee partnered with the Dobbs Ferry DPW and Hudson Compost Services to create public DeWaste Stations, providing education as well as food waste and recycling containers at all Wednesday evening jazz concerts at Waterfront Park throughout the summer. This was a very successful pilot program that diverted 922 gallons of trash over the course of the seven concerts, reducing the weight of refuse going to the incinerator by 77%! As a result of this success, the Zero Waste team, partnering with Hudson Compost Services, provided two separate Stations at the Ferry Festa this fall to help festa-goers sort their trash and food waste responsibly.

Reuse Programs: The Dobbs Ferry PTSA, with participation by the Village's Zero Waste Committee of Sustainable Dobbs, hosted its latest bi-annual pop-up Kids Clothing Swap on November 18, 2023. In an effort to keep used clothing out of the waste stream, the PTSA invited the community to the Springhurst gymnasium for a nominal entrance fee that ensured that once inside, all items would be free for the taking. Coinciding with the closing of the Village's much-beloved Affordables, the local children's consignment shop, the Zero Waste team recovered items from the store and filled three tables with all manner of kids' sports equipment, shoes, and baby accessories.

The event included a student-run metrics process which involved weighing and recording all donated items coming into the gym, as well as all chosen items being taken away, in order to quantify the efficiency of the event. The volunteers who ran the event, which included Dobbs Ferry children, gathered the following data on the outcome of this particular session:

- 350 lbs of clothing were brought to the swap by 40 participants
- 78% or 275 lbs of clothing found a new home within our community
- 75 lbs of clothing were picked up by Clothes Bins to be redistributed and/or recycled
- \$ 412 was raised for the Dobbs Ferry PTSA

Waste Reduction Education Campaign: In January 2023, Sustainable Dobbs launched a new, year-long educational campaign, DeWaste Dobbs, to dramatically improve the recycling rate in the Village. The campaign focused on four main actions throughout the year: food scrap recycling, household and bulk items recycling, reduction of single-use plastics, and yard waste best practices, targeting homeowners, apartment renters, and businesses through SD social media, the village newsletter, websites, and local events.

Examples of the campaign's outreach included:

- Encouraging over 225 residents to take The Pledge - to be mindful of their waste disposal practices [LINK to the PLEDGE](#)
- Hosting a campaign kick-off event at the public library for residents of all ages to build a 12-foot tall Trash Monster, including volunteers from local public and private schools, with attendance by local and county officials [LINK](#)
- Producing three large colorful banners with eye-catching messages about our Village's need to lose weight (in waste)
- Partnering with Hudson Compost Services to offer seven free weeks of curbside collection for village residents - to encourage food scrap recycling [LINK to HCS](#)

- Partnering with HCS and the DF DPW to host a DeWaste Station at all weekly Waterfront Park jazz concerts - to educate attendees on proper sorting of waste [LINK](#)
- Promoting the DeWaste Dobbs messages with activities and literature at multiple community events, including the spring DirtFest, the Phoenicia Flea Festival, the fall Ferry Festa, the Pumpkin Smash, and the spring and fall Springhurst Clothing Swaps.
- Posting bimonthly Trash Talk Tips - to educate residents on common misperceptions around recycling - in the Mayor's Newsletter and on SD Facebook and Instagram.
- Revising all recycling flyers to reflect proper procedures, including an updated list of donation centers for no-longer-needed items
- Working with the DF DPW to revise, advertise, and deploy the OOPS! sticker - a tool to educate residents on proper curbside pickup procedures
- Working with apartment management to provide signage and flyers at their recycling areas and to help inform their tenants of proper practices
- Reaching beyond DF in a radio interview with Town Supervisor Paul Feiner on WVOX The Greenburgh Report

As a result of the campaign, a \$5,000 grant from NYSERDA was awarded to the Village and will be earmarked specifically for a focused education awareness campaign around food scrap recycling, to begin in 2024.

Community Repair: Dobbs Ferry participates in an inter-village community effort known as "The Rivertowns Repair Café" which is organized by volunteers from Dobbs Ferry, Hastings, Irvington, Tarrytown, and Sleepy Hollow. Repair programs provide the opportunity for residents to bring household items to a local event to be repaired at no charge by skilled volunteers who are also their neighbors. These events help the community transition away from today's throwaway economy and reduce the amount of trash that gets incinerated. The last two Repair Cafes held in Dobbs Ferry were October 2021 and August 2023, both at the public library. The latest Café where Dobbs Ferry participated was in the community center in Hastings in November 2023. Dates for all the Repair Cafes are posted on the Hudson Valley Repair Café website. [LINK](#)

Compost Bins for Residents: Food scrap recycling "starter kits" are available at the Village Hall Administrative Office for \$20 per kit and at the Sustainable Dobbs table during many Village events. The kits include a countertop pail, storage and transportation bin, and a roll of 25 compostable bags for each container.

Residential Organic Waste: In May of 2019, Westchester County Legislator MaryJane Shimsky, along with then Village Mayor Bob McLoughlin, attended a ribbon cutting ceremony for the new Food Scrap Drop-off Site at the DPW, launching a DF Food Scraps Recycling Program. Residents are encouraged to bring their food scraps to the site for industrial-scale composting. In 2024, Sustainable Dobbs plans on brainstorming with Village administrators and the DPW on ways to make drop-offs more streamlined and community-friendly.

In January 2023, as part of Sustainable Dobbs' comprehensive DeWaste Dobbs campaign to reduce residential waste, Hudson Compost Services offered a free 7-week promotion on curbside food scraps collection for the first 100 Dobbs Ferry residents to sign up. This program was intended to promote an interest in curbside collection (for those resistant to the current drop-off program), with the hope that a village-wide program could be offered in the future. Hudson Compost currently serves over 120 Dobbs Ferry households, which is estimated to be the equivalent of more than 27 tons of trash per year diverted from the incinerator in Peekskill.

Along with organic food scrap waste drop-off, the Village also provides a weekly organic yard waste curbside collection program. The DPW picks up yard waste on the first day of the weekly garbage pickup. This yard waste goes to an organic waste site in Yonkers, where it gets converted into mulch.

PE6 Implement climate-smart land use

Smart Growth Policies: Smart Growth is a comprehensive development strategy utilizing the best practices of urban and environmental management to promote livable, socially diverse, economically strong, and healthy communities. The Village undertook a community outreach and engagement process back in 2010 to come up with a comprehensive Vision Plan that references the importance of Smart Growth principles for the Village. [LINK](#)

The Zoning Code was updated that year, and the following nine Smart Growth principles were included:

- Mixed Land Uses
- Compact Building Design
- Range of Housing Opportunities
- Walkable Neighborhoods
- Distinctive Communities with Sense of Place
- Preserve Open Space + Natural Features
- Strengthen Development towards Existing Communities
- Density Facilitating Non-Car Transportation Choices
- Make Development Decisions Predictable, Fair, Cost-Effective

Unified Solar Permit: The Unified Solar Permit is a standardized permit application designed to streamline the approval process for installing solar in the community. In December 2016, the Village adopted the New York State Unified Solar Permit, aligning Dobbs Ferry's already streamlined permit process with the process recommended by the State. This action is a qualifying NYSERDA Clean Energy Communities (CEC) Program High-Impact Action, for which the Village earned points in 2017.

NYStretch Energy Code: NYStretch Energy Code - 2020 was developed by NYSERDA as a statewide model code for New York jurisdictions to use to meet their energy and climate goals by accelerating the savings obtained through their local building energy codes. In October 2020, the Board of Trustees passed Local Law 6-202 to adopt the NYStretch Energy Code. Dobbs Ferry became the third municipality in NYS, outside of NYC, to adopt the Code, confirming our Village's leadership in the ongoing effort to make our world more sustainable.

Green Parking Lot Policies: Back in 2010, Dobbs Ferry was an early adopter of green parking policies, updating the Village Zoning Code to include the following provisions:

- In-lieu parking fees - an option whereby a fee is paid by developers in place of meeting minimum parking requirements.
- Reduce stall dimensions - creating more compact parking spaces and accurate stall size requirements that fit the growing trend in the number of smaller cars on the road.
- Promote shared parking - share parking lots with complementary users that need the lot at different times.
- Increase tree plantings in parking areas - to support stormwater management and provide shading to reduce the urban heat-island effect.

The Village's most recent update involving green parking policies is regarding a new ordinance that allows for Accessory Dwelling Units. Adopted in 2022, the updated Zoning Code now states that no additional parking will be mandatory for ADU's. This reduces the need for additional parking on site and will allow for more vegetation instead.

Planning for Biking + Walking: In March 2018, the Village conducted a comprehensive Pedestrian Safety Study funded by NYS DOT as part of the federal Safe Routes to Schools program. [LINK](#) It provided recommendations that included modifying existing infrastructure, raising pedestrian and driver awareness, and promoting the need for increased education and enforcement. A Resolution was passed by the DF Board of Trustees a few months later, declaring Dobbs Ferry to be a walkable + bikeable Village.

In addition, Dobbs Ferry residents and officials have been working with partners in four other Rivertowns communities to come up with a concept plan, funded by the NYS Thruway Authority, to create a Route 9 that is safer and more-accessible for all users - walkers, bikers, and drivers alike. Building upon the concept plan, the Village engaged Sam Schwartz Engineering in 2023 to provide final drawings to NYS DOT for creating a "road diet" at the Middle and High School campus and at the crossing of the Old Croton Aqueduct Trailway, effectively reducing the pedestrian and bicycle crossing distances at these locations, and creating a new ADA-accessible crosswalk at Sherman Avenue.

This work to make Route 9 safer for all users continues with a second grant, again funded by New York State and administered by NYS DOT, to make additional design changes that support walking, bicycling, and transit use.

Infrastructure for Biking + Walking: The Village has adopted a number of different actions in relation to improved infrastructure for bicycling and walking.

Expand or improve bike/walking paths, bike lanes, sidewalks:

- A new path on the campus of Mercy University, built at the behest of the Village as part of the Planning Board and BOT's requirement for a Transportation Demand Management plan and program, connects the campus with the train station, saving the students from having to walk in the street between diagonally parked cars and moving motorists.
- An improved pedestrian crossing and stair leading down to Springhurst Elementary School from Beacon Hill Drive, (a condition in the approval process for the new development at Rivertowns Square Market), saving children the need to be driven an extra 1.5 miles to get to the same point at the school.
- Most recently, a project beginning November 2023, to provide "bump outs" at two large intersections on Ashford Avenue which will ensure safer passage for pedestrians crossing this busy street.

Improve bike parking:

- New bike racks have been installed around the village, including at Rivertowns Square Market, at bus stops, and along the main streets of the village, utilizing some components from the old parking meters that were recently removed in the downtown.

Improve bike/pedestrian signage:

- New signage at Rivertowns Square Market, where bikers need to share the road for a short distance before connecting to the South County Trailway.
- New signage was installed for the young children walking to Springhurst Elementary School from Beacon Hill Drive.

The Village has undertaken to improve bicycling infrastructure with all new and existing public access development projects. For instance, it required that bike parking be installed by the developer of the Rivertowns Square Market.

Alternative Fuel Infrastructure: In 2015, the Village installed two electric vehicle (EV) charging stations in the municipal parking lot behind Village Hall. As part of a grant program for 2024, sixty (60) new EV charging stations will be distributed village-wide, six of which will be located behind Village Hall.

Access to Public Transit: Working with NYS's 511NYRideShare and the County's SmartCommute programs, the Village convened the leaders of all its major employers for a Transportation Demand Management conference in 2019 to promote innovations and best practices. [LINK](#)

The goal is to reduce single-occupancy vehicle use, replaced by walking, bicycling (and other micro-mobility modes), shuttles, mass transit, carpooling, and work-from-home. Best practices identified for sharing included:

- Parking "cash out" payments and accountability tech deployed by Mercy University to incentivize carpooling
- Shuttle "systems," with regular and reliable schedules, real-time arrival information, wayfinding signage, and tech, via smartphone apps
- BikeShare systems and other bicycling supports
- "Last Mile" planning for better paths/sidewalks to transit stations
- Array of tax and programmatic services to individuals and organizations to incentivize and coordinate transit use

Understanding that increased bus service is an important prerequisite for land use policies less reliant on single-occupancy vehicles, the Village participated in the development of the Westchester Mobility and Transit Plan, an ambitious effort to redesign bus service in the County. The Plan calls for increased bus service during the week, and especially on nights and weekends. The Village also directed the County to reroute the #6 Bee-Line bus to ensure safer access to downtown bus stops and to provide a connection to the Dobbs Ferry Metro-North Hudson Line rail service.

The addition of a new traffic signal with pedestrian phases at Ashford Avenue at Ogden/Lefurgy enabled safe access to two popular Bee-Line Bus stops. The traffic signal was part of the mitigation requirement for the Rivertowns Square mixed-use development.

Most recently, with the support of the Village, Mercy University constructed a new bus stop on Route 9 in 2023.

Safe Routes to School: The Village and Dobbs Ferry School District have committees devoted to providing safe routes for children that actively encourage parent and student involvement. The Sustainable Dobbs website has a dedicated section on Safe Streets, [LINK](#), outlining initiatives (past and future) that aim to make DF a more walkable/bikeable village, including newly reduced speed

zones on Route 9 (in front of the MS/HS) and times and locations of crossing guards for students. Resolution 3-2018 was adopted by the Board of Trustees, establishing a School Speed Limit Zone on Route 9, a NYS DOT controlled road.

In addition, a local advocacy group, Our Streets Dobbs Ferry, has been diligently working with Village officials to lower the Village speed limit to 20 miles per hour. [LINK](#)

Traffic Calming: The Rivertowns Square roadway and pedestrian upgrades, completed in 2018, included new sidewalks, speed humps, and a raised crosswalk along Ogden Avenue and Beacon Hill Drive, as well as crossing signage near the stairway that leads to Springhurst Elementary School.

In 2019, the Village redesigned the intersection of Walgrove Avenue and Bellewood Avenue, approaching Springhurst Elementary School and Children's Village, using plastic bollards and paint. The new T-shaped intersection led to passive enforcement of a stop sign, slowed motorists, and markedly shortened the pedestrian crosswalk for children walking to school.

Local Forestry Program: Sustainable Dobbs is part of a very active Village Tree Consortium made up of more than a dozen groups working to protect and support our beautiful trees. The following initiatives meet the state requirements:

Enact a Tree Preservation Ordinance:

- Chapter 300-51 of the Village Zoning Code is devoted to Tree Preservation.

Implement a large-scale tree planting project:

- In both 2022 and 2023, Groundwork Hudson Valley and the National Fish + Wildlife Foundation collaborated with the Village on a phased tree planting project to restore 15 acres of woodland property along the Saw Mill River, protecting some of the watershed's most intact wetlands and renewing the riparian environment there. More than 200 trees have been planted over the past two years.

Participate in one of the state's forestry programs:

- For the past few years, the Dobbs Ferry Conservation Advisory Board, in conjunction with Groundwork Hudson Valley, received trees and shrubs through the NY DEC "Trees for Tribes" Program, to be planted in Chauncy Saw Mill River Park. It is a large-scale tree-planting initiative for the Village that has been ongoing since 2020. The program has seen the successful planting of 65 trees/shrubs in Oct 2020, 75 in May 2021, 65 in Oct 2021, and 120 in Oct 2022 (for a total of 325 plantings).

Participate in Tree City USA:

- Dobbs Ferry was designated as a Tree City USA in 2019.

Zoning for Protection of Natural Areas: The Village has zoning ordinances that preserve its natural and scenic resources. Chapter 300-49 of the Zoning Code outlines procedures for protecting various topography and steep slopes, flood plains and natural drainage courses, wetlands, trees, and view corridors.

An inventory or index is maintained by the Conservation Advisory Board of all open spaces in public and private ownership within the Village. This Open Space Inventory includes: natural landmarks;

glacial and other geomorphic or physiographic features; streams and their floodplains; swamps; marshland and other wetlands; unique biotic communities; and scenic and other open areas of natural or ecological value. [LINK](#)

PE7 Enhance community resilience to climate change

Climate Vulnerability Assessment: Climate resilience begins with understanding hazards posed by a changing climate and identifying community vulnerabilities. In 2021, Dobbs Ferry completed a Hazard Mitigation Plan, coordinated through Westchester County, containing a comprehensive vulnerability assessment for climate hazards throughout the entire Village. [LINK](#) Besides listing all individuals and volunteer organizations involved in the assessment, it also lists specific areas of concern based on resident responses to the county's Dobbs Ferry Citizen Survey. The entire 2021 Westchester county-wide Hazard Mitigation Plan can be found here: [LINK](#)

Evaluate Policies for Climate Resilience: The Village of Dobbs Ferry received a grant from the NYS Department of State in 2020, in collaboration with four other municipalities and Pace University Land Use Law Center, to facilitate a community planning process, guiding the Village in developing a resiliency assessment and preparing local waterfront revitalization program resiliency components. Postponed due to covid, this program is now in process. The first part of this resiliency initiative is completed and includes a RISE Assessment, evaluating the Village policies and plans that are currently in place. A summary report will be provided in spring 2024.

Climate-Resilient Hazard Mitigation Plan: Hazard mitigation is the effort to reduce loss by lessening the impact of disasters. In 2021, Westchester County updated its Hazard Mitigation Plan for Dobbs Ferry. [LINK](#) The real effects of climate change, such as extreme weather conditions and sea level rise, result in serious hazards for a tidal riverfront village. Hazard area extent and location maps are included to illustrate areas in the Village that are most vulnerable to these climate-related conditions. It identifies the Village's specific vulnerabilities, lists previous mitigation actions, and proposes mitigation initiatives still possible.

On November 23, 2021, the Board of Trustees adopted the County's Dobbs Ferry Hazard Mitigation Plan Update in Resolution 154-2021. FEMA approved the Plan In January 2022.

Cooling Centers: The Dobbs Ferry Public Library was designated as a Cooling Center for the Village beginning in 2018. In 2022, the Village was awarded a NYS Legislative Aid Grant to upgrade the HVAC computer controller, and the upgrade was approved by the Board of Trustees in Resolution 71-1022. The information regarding the Cooling Center was sent to the DF residents every two weeks during the summer through the Library Newsletters and Mayor's Newsletters, with hours of operation included. The Embassy Community Center is designated by NYS as a Community Warming, Cooling, and Charging Center, funded by a CSC grant through the Department of Environmental Conservation. It will be fully operational by the end of 2023.

PE8 Support a green innovation economy

Green Jobs Training: In the context of its work to protect natural resources, the Village of Dobbs Ferry's Conservation Advisory Board (CAB) oversees implementation of the village's multi-year project to improve our woodlands ecosystems by removing invasive species and replacing them with native species and pollinator plants. Over the last several years, CAB has offered training on this work to hundreds of Dobbs Ferry and other local volunteers.

Select trainings between 2021 and 2023 have included the following:

- Juhring Nature Preserve Invasive Knotweed and Barberry Removal Trainings: 151 people were trained
- Chauncey Park Invasive Removal and Native Species Planting Trainings and Trail Maintenance: 149 people were trained
- Children's Village / Masters School Woods Project: 99 people were trained

Additional clearings and trainings carried out in 2023 include the below:

- Invasive Species Clearing in the Juhring Nature Preserve (removal of Invasive Japanese Knotweed and Japanese Barberry) and planting of 40 native shrubs
- Pollinator Garden & Trail Maintenance in Chauncey Park (weeding invasive mugwort, planting native pollinator species, wood-chip spreading on trails to prevent erosion, lining the trail with new limbs, etc)
- Native Tree & Shrub Planting and Invasive Species Clearing in Chauncey Park with NY Department of Environmental Conservation & Groundwork Hudson Valley

The initial training of CAB members was given by a certified arborist who is a member of both the Dobbs Ferry CAB and the Dobbs Ferry Tree Commission. Each CAB member then went on to train new volunteers, and those volunteers have gone on to train others, including youth. The CAB's training program responds to the identified need for a greater pool of individuals with expertise on removal of invasive species, which are a key driver of biodiversity loss. The CAB is creating a strong pool of trained individuals who can take part in these efforts in either a volunteer or professional capacity.

Green Vendor Fairs: In April 2023, Sustainable Dobbs held its second annual Dobbs DirtFest, an Earth Month event promoting local, sustainable businesses, food scrap and compost awareness, and planting of native pollinators.

Vendors in attendance included Mom's Organic Market, Hudson Compost Services, and Roots and Wings. Supporting vendors included Hudco, Bloomy Cheese and Provisions, Climbing Wolf, Cocoa Tree Chocolates, Endless Trail Bikeworx, Mossy Fern, the Pod, Red Barn Bakery, the Refill Room, and Tomatillo restaurant - all offering gift certificates for the end-of-event raffle for signers of the DeWaste Dobbs Pledge.

Attendees picked up free buckets of compost, watched a demonstration on backyard composting, and bought locally-grown plants from students at Children's Village.

Buy Local/Buy Green Campaign: Dobbs Ferry participates actively, with designated Village representatives, in the Rivertowns Chamber of Commerce, which encompasses businesses in Dobbs Ferry, Hastings-on-Hudson, Irvington, and Ardsley. It promotes business, marketing, and networking opportunities to benefit both the villages' and chamber members, professionally and economically. The Chamber of Commerce is committed to encouraging local business, employment, shopping, and services to make the Rivertowns a better place.

In previous years, the Village hosted the Dobbs Ferry Rivertown Public Market, a zero waste event held at Dobbs Ferry's Waterfront Park. This year, the Rivertown Public Market and the Rivertowns Chamber of Commerce joined forces to present the second annual Restaurant Crawl, a fun afternoon that promotes downtown businesses, links the Villages with a Rivertowns Food Trolley, and

raises money for local food pantries. In December, the Chamber of Commerce held its fifth annual Holiday Shopping Event, a family-friendly shopping tour of Hastings, Dobbs Ferry, and Irvington.

The Village also maintains a Local Development Corporation which is in the process of engaging a dedicated Village Economic Advocate. To promote buying local and supporting green businesses, a list of local businesses taking innovation steps to reduce waste is posted on the Sustainable Dobbs website. [LINK](#)

In 2023, Dobbs Ferry was selected as one of only five Westchester County localities to receive a grant designed to help stimulate revitalization of downtown areas. A public process of information-gathering has begun by the JGSC Group, and a report of findings and recommendations will be completed in the spring of 2024.

Community Choice Aggregation: Community Choice Aggregation (CCA) allows local governments to choose where the energy comes from for their community. CCA is a municipal energy procurement model that replaces the utility as the default supplier of electricity for virtually all homes and small businesses within the jurisdiction. By pooling demand, communities build the clout necessary to negotiate competitive rates with private suppliers and are able to choose cleaner energy. This commitment expands customer choice and spurs renewable energy development, while reducing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions on a much larger scale than individual actions. Dobbs Ferry has participated in CCA since early 2021. The current service is active up to November 2024, at which time we expect it to be renewed.

Community Campaigns: Dobbs Ferry has participated in NYSERDA's Clean Energy Communities (CEC) program and run numerous campaigns for many years, many of which have provided the Village with grant funding for further energy initiatives. The three most recent community campaigns for which we have received CEC approval are:

- Community Solar Campaign (Spring of 2021)
- Demand Response Campaign (Spring of 2021)
- Clean Heating and Cooling Campaign (Winter of 2023)

The Clean Heating and Cooling Campaign will continue throughout 2024. The others, though not presently active, continue to be promoted by Sustainable Dobbs by offering flyers at tabling events and periodically posting reminders in newsletters and on social media throughout the year.

PE9 Inform and inspire the public

Climate Change Education + Engagement: In May 2020, the DF Board of Trustees approved a policy overview document describing in detail its climate change community engagement strategy (including information on future efforts related to community resilience building and adaptation.) [LINK](#)

Dobbs Ferry and Sustainable Dobbs actively work to engage community residents in climate change education/awareness in a variety of ways, most recently:

- Earth Month Tree Planting, April 2023: As an example of an adaptation event, the Village, in partnership with the National Wildlife Refuge Association and other groups, brought community members together to plant 28 potted trees for stabilizing the riparian habitat along the Saw Mill River.

- DeWaste Stations, Summer 2023: As an example of a mitigation strategy, Sustainable Dobbs hosted a tent at weekly riverfront jazz concerts to educate the evening's picnickers on proper recycling and composting practices, reducing the amount of waste by 77% over the course of the seven events.
- Earth Overshoot Day, August 2023: A full-day event at the Public Library with awareness activities for all ages, including a Carbon Footprint calculation, a Repair Cafe, and a Sustainable Scavenger Hunt. The Hunt was a community-wide event, with 24 local business-owners participating by displaying window flyers for teens to find, highlighting their specific sustainable practices.
- Sustainable Dobbs accesses the village-wide e-readership of the Mayor's Newsletter to post bi-monthly Trash Talk Tips, to raise awareness of proper recycling practices.
- Food Scrap Awareness Program, 2024: The Village will embark on an initiative to educate and encourage more residents to participate in the existing food scrap program, funded by a \$5,000 grant by NYSERDA.

In addition to the Sustainable Dobbs webpage maintained on the Village of Dobbs Ferry website, there is also a dedicated SD website - www.sustainabledobbs.com - as well as Facebook [LINK](#) and Instagram [LINK](#) accounts that allow for active engagement with the public.

Energy Reduction Campaign: As part of NYSERDA's Clean Energy Communities (CEC) program, Dobbs Ferry has run numerous campaigns, many of which have provided the Village with grant funding for further energy initiatives. The energy reduction campaigns for which we have received CEC approval this year:

- Clean Heating and Cooling Campaign – EnergySmart HOMES (conducted in the winter of 2023). This is an ongoing campaign that the Village and Sustainable Dobbs continue to advertise with flyers, village-hung banners, and through newsletters and social media outlets. This past spring, the Village was rewarded with a \$5,000 grant as a result of five homeowners transitioning to air- or ground-sourced heat pumps or heat pump hot water heaters. The Village is eligible to receive an additional \$10,000 grant for the next 10 residents that install heat pumps in their homes.
- GridRewards Campaign (conducted in spring 2021 and 2023). GridRewards is a demand response program to lower our carbon footprint and save energy. The program encourages residents (homeowners and renters) to lower their electric use during peak usage days in the summer, reducing reliance on highly-polluting peaker plants that need to be used when demand is too great. With the free GridRewards app, Con Ed informs its customers with a Grid Alert on upcoming high-usage hours, and if steps are taken to reduce their loads during those times, Con Ed will send the resident a rebate at the end of the year. The Village participated in Sustainable Westchester's Mayor's Challenge between Dobbs Ferry, Hastings, Irvington, and Ardsley in 2021, and won with 129 new enrollees. This year, with Tarrytown, Elmsford, and Sleepy Hollow joining the challenge, Dobbs Ferry landed in 2nd place, garnering 46 new sign-ups among its residents. [LINK](#)

Climate-Related Public Events: The Village prioritizes climate action. Over the course of the past several years, a wide number of public events have been convened by Sustainable Dobbs to educate and inform the public about the vital role we must play in combating climate change. Most recently, in August 2023, the Zero Waste Committee, in partnership with the DF Public Library and Rivertowns Repair Café, hosted a series of events for all ages to bring awareness to the community about Earth Overshoot Day, the day when our demands on the Earth's resources

“overshoot” the resources the Earth can create for us. Activities included a teen-focused scavenger hunt throughout the downtown to raise awareness of green practices among local businesses; individual carbon footprint calculation and craft projects; and a repair café. The Village has also carried out a series of public awareness events in relation to its DeWaste Dobbs campaign, including the second annual Dobbs Dirt Fest, as described in section PE8 under Green Vendor Fairs.

Local Climate Action Website: Sustainable Dobbs is the principal volunteer group assigned responsibility on climate action in the Village of Dobbs Ferry. Sustainable Dobbs maintains a website - <https://www.sustainabledobbs.com> - which is also accessible through the Village's primary website.

Social Media: The Village of Dobbs Ferry has four main channels that focus on spreading awareness on climate change:

- The Sustainable Dobbs Webpage on the Village Website: [LINK](#)
- The Sustainable Dobbs Website: [LINK](#)
- Sustainable Dobbs Facebook: [LINK](#)
- Sustainable Dobbs Instagram: [LINK](#)

The Village also posts important sustainability initiatives and information through their village-wide e-newsletters, published bi-monthly. To receive quarterly Sustainable Dobbs newsletters, sign up [HERE](#).

PE10 Engage in an involving process of climate action

Annual Progress Report: As part of the responsibility of the newly-formed CSC Task Force, an annual Climate Action Progress Report will be generated by the second week in January of every year. It will be adopted by the Board of Trustees at the beginning of each year, and posted on both the Village website and the Sustainable Dobbs Website as a way to document the Village's achievements, challenges, and goals for its residents.

Innovation

New Innovative Actions: Dobbs Ferry, acting through informal multi-stakeholder partnerships involving local government (including the Department of Public Works, the Village's Conservation Action Board, its Beautification Committee, and Sustainable Dobbs), local community groups (including the Friends of Waterfront Park and Friends of the Old Croton Aqueduct), and local volunteers, is making significant efforts to combat invasive species. Since this is an area not covered by any of the CSC PEs, Dobbs Ferry will be submitting this as a new innovative action. Initiatives taken supporting this submission are detailed in a separate attachment, found here. [LINK to ATTACHMENT](#)

Innovative Approaches to CSC Actions: This year, Dobbs Ferry is submitting two separate projects that we believe are innovative in approach. Both are aligned with the action [PE5 Waste Reduction Education Campaign](#), but they take different creative approaches and are valuable to the community in different ways.

The first project is entitled **Citizen-Generated Data:**

The innovative approach here is the ways in which Dobbs Ferry has embraced the idea of community-member engagement in the process of data gathering, empowering citizens of all ages

to be able to monitor and track recycling activity and thereby witness firsthand how their individual habits can affect our overall waste consumption. [LINK for DETAILS](#)

The second project is the year-long **DeWaste Dobbs Campaign**:

The innovative approach here is the various inventive ways in which this 12-month waste reduction effort has tried to engage Village residents on all levels. [LINK for DETAILS](#) It began with a signature kick-off event at the public library - where the construction of a 12-foot-tall Trash Monster, decorated with the residents' own trash, served as a sort of creative community call-to-arms. You can access the delightful 1.5-minute video by DF resident and volunteer Bill Dorais, highlighting the action at the campaign kickoff - [LINK to SHORT VIDEO](#)

Both approaches have served as effective awareness programs that have enabled residents to engage in, and reap the benefits of, a reduction of municipal waste that would otherwise have been hauled to our county incinerator.

Performance

Reduce GHGs from Government Facilities: The Village has been proactive in working towards reducing greenhouse gas emissions from municipal properties for over ten years. As described in PE5 Solar Energy Installation, (see page 6 above), the solar panels installed on the DPW garage, the Public Library, and the Embassy Community Center, with a total capacity of nearly 90.5 kW, is estimated to have saved GHG emissions by approximately 38 metric tons of CO2 annually. The new Energy Performance Contract discussed earlier in this report will result in an upgrade to many municipal building systems, the most significant being at Village Hall, which, when completed in 2024, is projected to reduce GHG emissions by an estimated 51 metric tons of CO2 per year.

As described in PE3 Clean Energy Upgrades, (see page 5 above), Dobbs Ferry will see an annual 12.6% reduction in Village emissions as a result of the solar panels at the Embassy Center and the new heat pumps in Village Hall. This reduction qualified as a NYSERDA Clean Energy Communities (CEC) High-Impact Action, for which the Village earned points this year, contributing to the Village's current role as a Regional and Statewide Leader in the CEC program.

The CSC Task Force is currently undertaking an effort to seek out and upload energy data from 2021 to the present in order to keep the Village benchmarking reports current and useful, (see PE3 Benchmarking - Municipal Buildings on page 5 above). In this way, the Village will be more able to accurately track its annual energy savings and help to determine where future efforts should be placed in effectively reducing its municipal footprint.

CONCLUSION

Challenges encountered in 2023

In 2023, as Sustainable Dobbs worked towards obtaining silver level certification in the CSC program, we encountered the following challenges in relation to [gathering information](#):

- There is a [lack of disaggregated local level data](#) for Dobbs Ferry, which potentially hampers our ability to fully align with and implement the CSC PEs.

- Within Dobbs Ferry and within Sustainable Dobbs, there has historically been a lack of knowledge management, which has sometimes made it difficult to locate information on relevant current and past activities. In working towards silver level certification, Sustainable Dobbs has sought to remedy this issue.

Additionally, Sustainable Dobb's coordination with the Village in recent years has faced challenges due to a lack of consistency in relevant key Village staffing. This challenge has now been resolved with the appointment of a new village administrator this year.

Ongoing priorities and goals

In 2024, SD/CSCTF will continue to implement activities under the CSC Framework. Priority actions will be identified in early 2024 and set out in the SD/CSCTF's annual work plan.

In advancing its priorities, SD/CSCTF will also pursue the following goals:

- Strengthen coordination and coherence with the Board of Trustees and relevant village committees and task forces to raise awareness of the CSC program and to seek integration of its goals and PEs across the work of Dobbs Ferry local government.
- Ensure inclusive approaches to its work, including by seeking to increase community engagement through ongoing awareness raising, outreach, and carrying out of participatory activities.
- Encourage continuous learning, including by working to identify relevant capacity building opportunities for its members and the BOT and its boards.
- Work to identify new funding opportunities at all levels to support strengthened performance as a Climate Smart Community.