

## **Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness Program Action Grant Case Study**

**Municipality:** Sherborn

**Project Title:** Sherborn's Climate Action and Resilience Plan – A Model for Climate Mobilization for the MetroWest Region

**Award Year (FY):** FY2023

**Grant Award:** \$ 38,145.00

**Match:** \$ 31,522.69

**Match Source:** In-kind hours

**One- or Two-Year Project:** One year project

**Municipal Department Leading Project:** Sustainability Department

**Project Website URL:**

### **Community Overview:**

- What is the population size of your community and where is it located?

Sherborn is a semi-rural community with a population size of about 4500 residents located 18 miles southwest of Boston.

- Do you have any [Environmental Justice](#) or other Climate Vulnerable communities? (Think about both those who live and work in your town.)

While Sherborn does not have an environmental justice population, the U.S. Census 2014-2018 American Community Survey estimates that 23.8% of the 4,301 residents are 60 years or older and that number is expected to rise significantly by 2030. Seniors are a particularly vulnerable group with respect to the impacts of climate change.

- Other unique traits of your municipality like who the top employers are, geography, history, etc.

The town was incorporated in 1674 and still maintains its rural heritage, which is evident in active farms and orchards, winding tree-lined roads, and also preserved in forest and other extensive public lands (open space comprises more than 50% of the land area).

### **Project Description and Goals:**

- Where was the project located? In town
- What climate change impacts did the project address? This project led to the creation of a Climate Activation and Resilience Plan.

- What were the specific goals and tasks of the project as stated in your application? That project used a range of interconnected school- and community-based outreach and engagement strategies for identifying 10-15 priority measures for mitigating emissions and reducing vulnerabilities to climate change. The plan takes in account the interrelated sustainability issues concerning Sherborn's unique ecological resources, the current state of the community's tree canopy on private and public lands, and current landscaping practices.
- Did your project meet the goals set forth in your application in terms of:
  - Employing nature-based solutions
  - Improving equitable outcomes for and fostering strong partnerships with EJ and other Climate Vulnerable Populations – Yes, the engagement with vulnerable populations were successful and priorities identified
  - Providing regional benefits – Yes, the unique engagement programs, panel discussion, and educational formats were shared with adjacent towns (Weston, Natick, Medfield, Framington, Holliston, and Wellesley.
  - Implementing the public involvement and community engagement plan set forth in your application – Yes, all public involvement (kick-off event, surveys, talks, meetings) were well attended.
  - Finishing the project on time – Yes, finished on time by June 30<sup>th</sup>.

### **Results and Deliverables:**

- Describe, and quantify (where possible) project results (e.g., square footage of habitat restored or created, increase in tree canopy coverage, etc.). Report out on the metrics outlined in your application. – The identification of 10-15 priority measures was based on a Resilience Framework and Guiding Principles that helped to identify the most urgent actions to go forward.
- Provide a brief summary of project deliverables with web links, if available. – Deliverables included forming a Climate Action and Resilience Group staffed by 15 board and committee members, drafting and executing two community surveys on climate priority concerns, identifying best practice case studies, evaluating priority actions, and drafting blueprints for the top two priority actions as a planning tool for the implementation phase of this plan.

### **Lessons Learned:**

- What lessons were learned as a result of the project? Focus on both the technical matter of the project and process-oriented lessons learned. -----The envisioned technical support from MAPC for drafting tree management guidelines for Sherborn did not get funded; we had to resort to put some more general tree guidelines in the Residential Climate Action Toolkit instead. In terms of process-oriented lessons, we

learned that in a smaller community with a high percentage of older residents, in-person meetings are more productive than virtual ones. Depending on age, people prefer different ways of communication. For example, for promoting the two surveys we used email, text, newsletters, newspaper, and social media.

- What is the best way for other communities to learn from your project/process? -----The best way to keep a community engaged over a nine-month process is to look for advocates for the plan at the different levels of the community that reach into their social networks and communicate the importance of the plan goals. For example, one of the plan goals was the adoption of a more stringent building code, so-called the Opt-in Stretch Code. We made that Code the topic of our community engagement in February and our advocates educated their networks on this complicated subject in a way that the Code was overwhelmingly passed in April's Town Meeting.

### **Partners and Other Support:**

- Include a list of all project partners and describe their role in supporting/assisting in the project.

Dover Sherborn High School Sustainability Task Force (student-led committee); seven students led the Intergenerational Climate Conversations with older residents that led to a better understanding of the challenges of this age group.

Sherborn's Energy and Sustainability Committee; chair and members crafted Select Board and Advisory Committee presentations as well as an "Expert Panel on Building Energy Efficiency".

The Boggestow Garden Club in collaboration with the Groundwater Protection Committee and the Open Space Committee; launched a Pollinator Pathway Initiative for educating residents on the risks of using pesticides on their properties to pollinators and to the health of the groundwater supplies.

The Sherborn Library staff assisted in hosting the CRWG in-person meetings, co-sponsoring the Sustainability Speaker's Series, and posted all relevant information of the planning process on the library website and indoor LCD displays.

The Sherborn Forest and Trail Association for supporting the presentation of the first survey results during the annual gala.

### **Project Photos:**

- In your electronic submission of this report, please attach (as .jpg or .png) a few high-resolution (at least 300 pixels per inch) representative photos of the project. Photos

should not show persons who can be easily identified, and avoid inclusion of any copyrighted, trademarked, or branded logos in the images. MVP may use these images on its website or other promotional purposes, so please also let us know if there is someone who should receive credit for taking the photo.



CRWG #3 Meeting in the library discussing the need to upgrade Elementary School with air-source heat pumps for preventing heat-outs.  
Photo credit: Dorothea Von Herder



Intergenerational Climate Conversations at the Sherborn Library on June 9<sup>th</sup>, 2023. Highschool students and older residents discuss local solutions to climate change.

Photo credit: Dorothea Von Herder








Boggestow Garden Club member Carol McGarry educating residents on the pesticide-free landscaping practices for benefitting pollinators and groundwater supply.




Solar coach and member of the Energy and Sustainability Committee, Brad Karalius, advising fellow-residents on air-source heat pumps.



# SHERBORN EARTH DAY GREEN CRAWL

13kW Solar PV,  
geothermal system,  
Mustang Mach E

**22.04.2023**  
**10-12PM AND 2-4 PM**  
**AT 55 MAPLE STREET**



8kW Solar System, Air-  
Source Heat Pumps,  
Tesla Model 3


**22.04.2023 | 10-12 PM**  
**6 BRUSH HILL ROAD**

Event postings on social media and  
the Sustainable Sherborn Newsletter.

Design: Lilly Caplan & Dorothea Von  
Herder

*Did you notice the  
heat and drought  
in the woods this  
summer?*

*Yes, I did, and I  
am worried it's  
going to be the new  
normal*



## *Intergenerational Climate Cafes*

Two generations focusing on solutions to climate change  
Join us on May 12th , 3:30-5:30 PM at the new library