

# **CLIMATE READY BOSTON COMMUNITY LEADERS PILOT PROGRAM**

## ***Commonwealth Compact Status Report - June 2018***

### ***Overview***

The City of Boston and its residents can only achieve a healthy, sustainable, and resilient future through collective effort. Due to Boston's vulnerability to climate change, the City's Environment Department developed a program that empowers residents to participate in and lead direct actions to mitigate and adapt to climate change.

For the initial pilot, the City worked with Climate Access, a nonprofit expert in climate communications, to transform a 400+ page technical report on climate vulnerability and resiliency into accessible materials, facilitated trainings, and program recommendations. The City then used the funds from the Commonwealth Compact grant to implement the pilot program with community members. The total grant of \$33,931 was expended towards implementation of the pilot.

### ***Implementation and Accomplishments***

The City of Boston hosted three separate, 2-hour trainings for 70 community members to participate in the leaders program. More than 80 percent of those trained were Boston residents coming from nearly 20 neighborhoods. The most represented neighborhoods were Dorchester, Downtown, the Seaport, Jamaica Plain, East Boston and the North End.

Participants in the program came from both the private and public sector, representing dozens of different communities including landscape architects and engineers, tourism and hospitality, open space and environmental nonprofits, developers, small businesses, educators, and cultural institutions.

After training, 35 subsequent events were held by leaders to talk about climate change and what can be done to address it in their own communities. The City provided steps by request to support those leaders who committed to reaching 30 people or more. In total, leaders of the initial pilot program reached approximately 650 people.

The Commonwealth Compact grant also supported:

- The hiring of a full-time community manager to facilitate the trainings, provide one-on-one support to leaders, develop the program, and recruit new leaders.
- Translation of program materials (PowerPoint presentation, dialogue support tools and a neighborhood specific tip sheet) in Boston's five most commonly spoken languages - Spanish, Chinese, Vietnamese, Haitian Creole and Cape Verdean.
- A finale events for leaders and their friends to celebrate their participation in the program and to recruit new leaders for upcoming trainings.

### ***Next Steps***

The City is near completion of its second round of leader trainings and subsequent events and is experiencing similar success - nearly 70 trained leaders, more than 40 events hosted and more than 700 individuals reached. The City is currently working with Climate Access again to update the program materials to include information on climate mitigation and what Boston can do to achieve carbon neutrality by 2050.

The City hopes to re-launch the program with the new materials and trainings this fall at the Greenovate Boston Leaders program. The newly launched program will focus on expanding participation for youth through Boston Public Schools and for Boston's most vulnerable communities. The program will continue to provide financial stipends, one-on-one support, and translated materials for its participants.

The City of Boston is actively seeking grants to support the expansion and growth of this program and would be able to provide additional materials if considered for any subsequent funding from the Commonwealth Compact. Thank you for this opportunity to build out our community engagement efforts.