

Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness Program Action Grant Case Study

Municipality: Oak Bluffs lead town for Martha's Vineyard/co-applicant Martha's Vineyard Commission

Project Title: Development of an Island-wide Specific Adaptation Strategy

Award Year (FY): FY20 – extended to FY21 per Covid)

Grant Award: \$ \$54,000

Match: \$ \$31,000

Match Source: In-Kind

One or Two Year Project: One year extended to two years

Municipal Department Leading Project: Conservation Commission

Project Website URL: www.oakbluffsma.gov

Community Overview:

- What is the population size of your community and where is it located? The community is the Island of Martha's Vineyard, with a year-round population of about 20,000 and a seasonal population of over 200,000.
- Do you have any [Environmental Justice](#) or other Climate Vulnerable communities? (Think about both those who live and work in your town.)

The Island has a large Brazilian population, many of whom speak English as a second language, a Wampanoag community, an African American summer community, and a large and growing senior population.

- Other unique traits of your municipality like who the top employers are, geography, history, etc. The Vineyard is unique in that it is an Island community. We are a year-round community, but the major economy is tourism/seasonal visitors. We are vulnerable on all our edges to the coastal impacts of climate change. Climate change will also affect the economy of the Island as we face more extreme weather, more coastal erosion and flooding, and changes in the coastal real estate market.

Project Description and Goals:

- Where was the project located? The project encompasses the entire Island of Martha's Vineyard.
- What climate change impacts did the project address? The project addressed the overall impacts of climate to the Island community.
- What were the specific goals and tasks of the project as stated in your application? The goals of this project were 1.) to gather and create a resource database of all local and regional documents that relate to climate issues including land use documents, planning documents, maps, etc. 2.) initiate community and stakeholder listening sessions on climate issues and concerns, and 3.) develop climate adaptation resource booklets for

each of the six Island towns, print the booklets and present them to each Select Board as part of a climate change educational presentation.

- 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
 - Providing regional benefits
 - Implementing the public involvement and community engagement plan set forth in your application
 - Finishing the project on time

This project sets the stage for Phase II of the Climate Adaptation Planning Process, which will entail development of a Climate Action Plan that will address all the above. This project, through the climate adaptation booklets, provided regional benefits. This project did implement community involvement through extensive listening sessions and, with an extension due to covid-related issues, the project was completed on time.

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. This project resulted in a documents database for use in developing an Island-wide Climate Action Plan and Climate Adaptation Resource Booklets for each Island town.
- Provide a brief summary of project deliverables with web links, if available. An intern was hired and collected over 400 documents that were put into a database for use in developing an Island-wide Climate Action Plan; initiate and oversee stakeholder listening sessions; develop adaptation resource booklets specific to each Island town; develop presentation materials based on adaptation booklets; present adaptation booklet to each Island Select Board in the form of a Power Point; prepare a memo on findings from meetings with Select Boards and public

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. We learned that to develop a strong Climate Action Plan we must first lay a strong foundation. This grant project is the foundation. We learned that it is important to be knowledgeable of the information and documents already in existence when planning for climate change, to use history to help plan for the future as well as to avoid duplicating efforts. We learned that successful climate action planning is the result of listening to the voices and knowledge of the community – we held over 20 Listening Sessions with groups including town department heads, realtors, the Chamber of Commerce, Pond and conservation organizations, Seniors, and the NAACP. The listening sessions continue. And we learned

that the town leaders – specifically the Select Boards, must be educated about local change impacts if any adaptation and mitigation efforts are going to be successful; factual and town-specific climate adaptation booklets were well-received by the six Island Select Boards.

- What is the best way for other communities to learn from your project/process? As we develop the Climate Action Plan, we will incorporate lessons learned to assist other towns who may use the Martha's Vineyard Climate Action Plan as a climate change planning resource. The CAP will be on a dashboard website, available to the public.

Partners and Other Support:

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

Town of Oak Bluffs:

Liz Durkee, Conservation agent (2020) and MVC Climate change planner (2021) – led Listening Sessions, follow-up memos, follow-up collaboration, overall coordination
Robert L. Whritenour, Jr., Town Administrator – fiscal manager

Martha's Vineyard Commission:

Adam Turner, Executive Director – project manager
Chris Seidel – GIS Specialist – develop maps for climate adaptation booklets
Dan Doyle – MVC Planner – coordinate listening sessions, assist in developing resource database
Alex Elvin – MVCV Planner – develop resource data base
Tony Lima – MVC intern – gather over 400 resource documents

Meghan Gombos – Sea Change Consulting – development of climate adaptation booklets, Select Board presentations, presentation memo

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.