

## CLIMATE SMART COMMUNITIES – MID-HUDSON REGION REGIONAL CLIMATE SMART COMMUNITIES STRATEGY

### INTRODUCTION

VHB Engineering, Surveying and Landscaping Architecture, P.C. (VHB), in collaboration with ICF International, is pleased to provide this Regional Climate Smart Communities Strategy which outlines the process for delivering services and resources to Climate Smart Communities (CSC) in the Mid-Hudson Region for Years Two and Three of the Climate Smart Communities Coordinator Pilot Program. The proposed approach for the next two years of this pilot program includes continuing to document the progress of existing CSC participants, communicating the results of the Mid-Hudson Regional Greenhouse Gas Emissions Inventory, identifying potential new CSC participants, assisting with development of local government operations greenhouse gas emissions inventories, connecting with existing CSC participants to determine their specific needs, and delivering high-quality, relevant resources and educational opportunities as well as one-on-one tailored assistance. In addition to working closely with existing CSC participants, the VHB Team will reach out to a broader audience throughout the Mid-Hudson region to promote the successes of the CSC Program and to recruit and engage new CSC participants.

In order to assess and deliver the services and resources to the CSC participants, the VHB Team will employ a variety of methods and tools. These methods, which are described in detail in this strategy, include:

- *Conducting another survey of existing climate protection efforts using online survey tools;*
- *Updating the inventory of local government information and progress using a cloud-based technology;*
- *Conducting in-person consultations to assess the individual needs and create a strategy for moving beyond climate protection barriers;*
- *Creating climate protection technical guides and resources that provide direction on how to achieve the CSC pledge elements; and*
- *Organizing in-person trainings and webinars to provide learning opportunities at a variety of scales to local governments throughout the Mid-Hudson Region and the state.*

VHB has developed an online database, to track and report the progress of, and interaction with, Mid-Hudson Region local governments. Each CSC participant has an account which includes the CSC pledge elements achieved to-date, the contacts for the CSC Program, attendance at events, projects that VHB is working on with them, and VHB correspondence with the local government liaisons. Reports can be developed on-demand for each of these areas.

Throughout the Pilot Program, the VHB Team will provide a consistent level and quality of service to each CSC participant through a comprehensive CSC Team. The VHB Team is comprised of professionals with expertise in climate protection, greenhouse gas emissions accounting, engagement and communications, graphics and marketing, sustainability, land use planning and other relevant skills. The VHB Team will work in concert to develop templates and tools, continually update the database of CSC participants and their actions, and support the on-the-ground implementation of the Regional CSC Strategy. Through Years Two and Three, the VHB Team will continue to identify and engage potential recruits, drive local marketing efforts, and identify and document the best practices and innovative anchor projects in the Mid-Hudson Region. Key staff will be in charge of facilitating in-person consultations and delivering technical assistance in their areas of expertise. These staff will also tap the support and experience of key partners and experts, as necessary. Finally, our Team, which includes ICF International, will create top-notch, easy-to-use technical templates, guidebooks and resources, and



coordinate local education and training opportunities. We are excited to proceed with this project and look forward to working with the Mid-Hudson Region CSC participants to boost their climate protection efforts to the next level.

## **COMMUNICATE THE RESULTS OF THE REGIONAL GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS INVENTORY**

In Year One, the VHB Team, in collaboration with ICF International, conducted a regional greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions inventory, allocated to the municipal level, for the seven-county Mid-Hudson Region (Dutchess, Orange, Putnam, Rockland, Sullivan, Ulster, and Westchester Counties). The purpose of the regional GHG emissions inventory was to provide the Climate Smart Communities and Cleaner, Greener Communities programs with a baseline against which to compare future inventories to show progress and reductions in GHG emissions. The regional GHG emissions inventory quantifies the emissions in the region for the baseline year of 2010 from a variety of sectors including residential, commercial, transportation, agricultural, and waste. The VHB Team followed the methodology created through participation in the New York State Regional Greenhouse Gas Working Group and the Environmental Protection Agency's Draft Regional GHG Inventory Guidance and to develop the final inventory. In addition to creating a baseline for the Mid-Hudson Region, the results of the inventory were used to inform the development of the Mid-Hudson Regional Sustainability Plan to assist in prioritizing projects and strategies that achieve quantifiable reductions in GHGs. The regional GHG emissions inventory was completed in the fall of Year One.

In Year Two, and continuing into Year Three, the VHB Team will focus on communicating the availability and results of the Regional GHG Emissions Inventory at the In-Person Consultations via distribution of flash drives loaded with materials, on the Mid-Hudson CSC website, and in a fact sheet that reports on additional results of the inventory (i.e., community with the highest and lowest GHG emissions in the region, areas where transportation emissions are highest, etc.). The VHB Team anticipates that this will not only assist in focusing appropriate resources to areas of the region, but also result in adoption of strategies that effectively reduce greenhouse gas emissions. In addition to promoting the results of the Regional GHG Emissions Inventory, VHB will actively be encouraging local governments to complete a Local Government Operations GHG Emissions Inventory through social media, the website and at In-Person Consultations.

## **CONNECT WITH NEW & SUPPORT EXISTING CLIMATE SMART COMMUNITIES**

### **1. Recruit for and Market the CSC Program**

#### ***Recruiting New Climate Smart Communities***

VHB began with a phased approach to recruitment throughout the three-year pilot program. Year One efforts were focused on providing much-needed resources and support to sustain the existing Climate Smart Communities in their climate protection efforts. A number of the resources and services that have been designed for existing Climate Smart Communities are easily transferrable or require the same amount of resources to provide to one or 100 communities and will be available to any community interested in the CSC program.

In Years Two and Three, the VHB Team will ramp up its recruitment efforts and use the following approach to identify and engage potential CSC participants for the remainder of the Pilot:

- Assess the current climate protection activities of other communities in the region through research, discussions with current CSC participants, partners in the region, and through attendance at events.

- Based on the research and knowledge of the region, the VHB Team will develop criteria for reaching out to new communities, which may include, but not be limited to, local governments who: have conducted or are conducting GHG emissions inventories; are recommended by existing CSCs; are participating in a regional consortium or other effort (i.e., NWEAC and SWEAC); are adjacent to other CSCs where they could leverage the support of their peers and combine resources to achieve additional pledge elements; are members of ICLEI and/or other climate or sustainability-related campaigns;
- Conduct one-on-one meetings with potential Climate Smart Communities; and
- Invite potential CSC participants to in-person trainings and webinars. CSC Program materials will be available at all in-person events and a stock slide presentation will be created about “How to Become a Climate Smart Community.”
- Speaking at events, such as the American Planning Association Metro Biennial Conference and other local or regional events.

We are confident that a buzz was created after Year One by providing 47 existing CSC participants with in-person consultations (see below), webinars and trainings, and valuable climate protection services and resources. VHB’s goal for this program is to **create raving fans** who will promote the benefits of participating in the Climate Smart Communities network. To continue this buzz, VHB is planning to ramp up the number of targeted webinars, trainings and presentations at events that focus on the benefits of the CSC Program, in addition to more rigorous recruitment of new CSC participants by using the criteria developed and referenced above.

### ***Marketing the CSC Program and CSC Successes***

In order to raise the visibility of both the CSC Program and climate change issues, a marketing strategy was developed that is diverse and broad reaching. A variety of tools are being utilized to this end, including:

- Mid-Hudson Climate Smart Communities website: <http://www.midhudsoncsc.org/>
- Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/MidHudsonClimateSmartCommunities>
- Twitter: @MHRClimateSmart
- LinkedIn Group: [http://www.linkedin.com/groups/Climate-Smart-Communities-MidHudson-Region-5040263?trk=my\\_groups-b-grp-v](http://www.linkedin.com/groups/Climate-Smart-Communities-MidHudson-Region-5040263?trk=my_groups-b-grp-v)
- Pocket Pledge
- How to Become a CSC two-page guide – coming in winter 2014

These tools are being used to announce workshops, trainings and webinars applicable to CSC participants; promote best practices in achieving the CSC pledge elements and anchor projects (i.e., spotlight on a new solar field or innovative employee engagement program); communicate the resources that have been developed through this pilot program, for instance where to find an intern, the release of the Climate Action Plan Guidebook, etc.; and to build enthusiasm and interest from existing and potential new CSC participants. The CSC social media sites also take advantage of the established network of climate and sustainability networks such as Energize NY (<http://energizeny.org/>), the Economic Development Growth Extension Program (EDGE), Northern Westchester Energy Action Consortium (NWEAC - <http://www.nweac.org/>), Southern Westchester Energy Action Consortium (SWEAC - <http://www.sweac.org/>), Energize Bedford (<http://energizebedford.org/>), state chapters of the American Planning Association, and other aligned organizations. By linking to these networks, the CSC Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn accounts increase visibility and attract followers. The VHB Team will also continue working with these organizations to promote the CSC Program through their newsletters and other member outreach techniques (including listservs).

Another method of marketing the CSC program will be through identification of, and participation in, local, regional and even statewide events such as workshops, conferences, seminars, meetings and other events where the VHB Team can promote the CSC Program successes to local governments and other key stakeholders. The VHB Team is connected to several active professional networks with primarily municipal audiences such as the American Planning Association and county Planning Federations. Members of these networks oftentimes serve as the CSC Program elected official or staff liaison. The VHB Team will also tap into other networks of municipal staff and elected officials, businesses, and academia (such as Pace Law Center) to find diverse and appropriate audiences to promote the CSC Program and its successes. VHB will continue to work with these and other networks to increase exposure to the CSC Program.

## 2. Climate Protection Custom Service Delivery

To properly execute the goals of the Climate Smart Communities Coordinator Pilot Program, the VHB Team will continue working with existing CSC participants directly. The direct engagement process that will be implemented can be broken down into three steps: 1) Community Assessment; 2) Connecting with the Communities; and 3) Delivering Customized Services. This framework will allow the VHB Team to continue to provide quality, relevant services that respond to the local government’s individual needs. The chart below outlines the process.



The above framework will continue throughout the three- year pilot project. The Climate Protection Custom Service Delivery Team will annually conduct an in-person meeting and develop a Customized Service Strategy based on the varying needs of the CSC. Community Profiles will be developed as new communities take the CSC pledge and will be updated on a regular basis throughout the pilot program.

### **Step 1: Community Assessment**

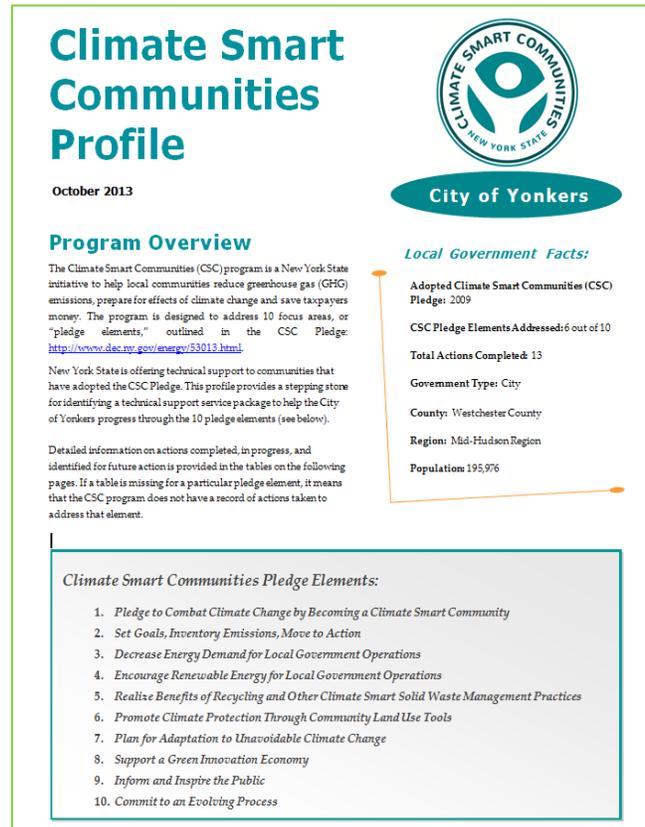
To begin the Assessment step in Year One, the VHB Team conducted desktop research on the progress each community has made in achieving the ten CSC pledge elements. In addition to the information provided by NYSERDA and NYSDEC, an online “background check” on every community was conducted to determine and confirm what had been achieved. The VHB Team also collected supporting information, including GHG emissions inventories, climate action plans, zoning ordinances, and other documentation. All of this information was input into the online database.

The VHB Team’s research to date determined that the local governments in the Mid-Hudson Region are in varying stages of the climate action planning process. For example, VHB ran a report on the number of local governments that have started or completed a climate action plan and determined that 21 CSCs, or 44% of the 47 CSC participants in the Mid-Hudson Region are either working on or have completed a climate action plan and/or sustainability plan.

In addition to the background research, a survey was developed for Year One and again in Year Two using SurveyMonkey®. The surveys sought to further determine progress through the Climate Smart Communities pledge and to understand the specific areas where local governments would like to receive technical assistance, including conducting GHG emissions inventories, climate action planning, and developing and implementing cost effective climate protection strategies.

Based on the information that has been collected through research and In-Person Consultations from Year One, Community Profiles have been created and will be provided to each CSC participant. The Community Profile (see Figure 1) includes pertinent information on the current climate protection efforts and the details of any completed pledge elements. The Community Profiles are a result of researching public documents, municipal websites, and other available anecdotal information. These Profiles represent the baseline of each community’s activities and are instrumental in familiarizing the VHB Team with the local government’s structure and level of commitment to the CSC pledge.

Figure 1: Sample Community Profile



The Community Profiles are created directly from the online database and are maintained by all members of the VHB Team. The online database allows for the most accurate and timely records to be kept on each local government. At any time, a local government can contact the VHB Team and each member will have access to all necessary information through the database. The VHB Team member logs notes from the call and documents the action items. The Community Profiles are provided to each CSC participant two weeks prior to the In-Person Consultation. This allows the local government staff to provide any missing information or correct any errors. In addition, the Profile allows community staff and officials to see what information is readily available regarding their CSC pledge efforts. The Profile will be used as a foundation for a discussion on which type of technical assistance will best meet the needs of each CSC participant. The Community Profiles are designed to be uploaded to the Climate Smart Communities website after final approval from the CSC participant so other participants can learn from their best practices.

Figure 2: Online Database Screen Shot from Cortlandt, NY Account

**Account Detail** [Edit](#) [Delete](#) [Sharing](#)

Account Name	Town of Cortlandt <a href="#">View Hierarchy</a>	Adopted CSC Pledge?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Industry	Government	Year Adopted CSC Pledge	2009
Government Type	Town	Website	
CSC Region	Lower Hudson Valley		
Parent Account	<a href="#">Westchester County</a>		
2010 Population	41,592		

**▼ Member Affiliations**

ICLEI Member?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Climate Registry	<input type="checkbox"/>
NWEAC Member?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	SWEAC Member?	<input type="checkbox"/>

**▼ Address Information**

Primary CSC Contact	<a href="#">Dani Glaser</a>	Shipping Address	
Highest Ranking Official	<a href="#">Linda Puglisi</a>	Billing Address	1 Heady Street Cortlandt Manor, NY 10567
Fax			
Phone			

**▼ Community Profile Summary**

Community Profile Summary	
Community Seal	
Community Image	

**Custom Links**

[Google Search](#) [Google Maps](#) [Google News](#)

[Edit](#) [Delete](#) [Sharing](#)

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**Contacts** [New Contact](#) [Merge Contacts](#)

Action	Contact Name	Title	Email
<a href="#">Edit</a>   <a href="#">Del</a>	<a href="#">Dani Glaser</a>	Sustainability Consultant	<a href="mailto:dani@greenteamsprit.com">dani@greenteamsprit.com</a>
<a href="#">Edit</a>   <a href="#">Del</a>	<a href="#">Linda Puglisi</a>	Supervisor	<a href="mailto:lindsay@townofcortlandt.com">lindsay@townofcortlandt.com</a>

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**Action** [New Action](#)

Action	Opportunity Name	Action Category	Pledge Element	Stage
<a href="#">Edit</a>   <a href="#">Del</a>	<a href="#">Government GHG Reduction Target</a>	Gov't GHG Reduction Target	2. Set Goals, Inventory Emissions, Move to Action	Completed
<a href="#">Edit</a>   <a href="#">Del</a>	<a href="#">Community and Government GHG Inventory</a>	Community and Gov't GHG Inventory	2. Set Goals, Inventory Emissions, Move to Action	In progress
<a href="#">Edit</a>   <a href="#">Del</a>	<a href="#">Climate Action Plan</a>	Climate Action Plan	2. Set Goals, Inventory Emissions, Move to Action	In progress
<a href="#">Edit</a>   <a href="#">Del</a>	<a href="#">Geothermal HVAC</a>	Renewable Energy Feasibility Study	4. Encourage Renewable Energy for Local Government Operations	Identified
<a href="#">Edit</a>   <a href="#">Del</a>	<a href="#">Consolidation of Driving Routes</a>	Fleet Energy Efficiency Upgrades	3. Decrease Energy Demand for Local Government Operations	Completed

### Step 2: Connecting with the Communities

In-Person Consultations are offered to all of the Climate Smart Communities in the Mid-Hudson Region throughout the Pilot Program. These consultations allow the VHB Team to:

- Review the Community Profiles and their progress towards achieving the pledge elements
- Introduce the Regional Coordinator Services and overall pilot program
- Review current initiatives and projects they are working on
- Identify areas where they need assistance on accomplishing their climate protection efforts
- Identify what resources they have available
- Determine a customized approach for meeting their climate protection needs

The VHB Team will send an invitation to the highest elected official and (where applicable) the primary staff liaison for the CSC Program to schedule the In-Person Consultation. Meetings will be scheduled with the elected official, staff and volunteers working on the CSC Task Force (or equivalent, where applicable). The meetings last approximately 1 ½ to 2 hours. During the consultations, options are discussed with the community regarding what resources are needed to bring the community to the next level of activity and closer to achieving the goals of the CSC Pledge. All information gathered during the consultations is processed and used to create a Custom Service Strategy (see Step 3) that meets the desires and needs of the CSC participant.



The VHB Team sends two people to conduct the consultations. The staff facilitates the In-Person Consultation to address: community progress to-date in achieving the pledge elements, the types of projects the community has implemented, and the results of the survey (where applicable).

The delivery of In-Person Consultations will be divided into two phases. The first phase will be in the fall, with technical assistance provided directly to communities in the months following. The second will be in the spring, with technical assistance for those communities being provided through May. This approach will allow the VHB Team to consult with, and deliver high quality services to, a more intimate group of communities. It will also allow us to evaluate the approach mid-year and at the end of Year Two, and to make any necessary modifications to service delivery for Year Three.

### **Step 3: Delivering Customized Services**

Each community receives a Custom Service Strategy within two weeks of the In-Person Consultation. This strategy summarizes the priorities identified at the In-Person Consultation and outlines what kind of technical assistance will be provided to the community, how it will be delivered, which team members will provide it, and when it will be completed. The Custom Service Strategy provided to each CSC participant will be based on several factors: the actions a local government has already completed to fulfill the CSC pledge, the resources and capacity of the local government, and their ultimate climate protection goals. Delivery of services will be tailored to meet the specific needs of the community and may take a variety of forms, including: a "Meet the Expert" session to discuss a climate protection issue in greater detail; a guide that provides more direction on achieving a specific action in a pledge element; or an in-person training (open to any CSC participant) that will allow communities to not only move past their own barriers, but also benefit their CSC peers. More detail about the potential topics and types of resources that will be delivered can be found in the *Climate Protection Tool and Resource Development and Education: Trainings and Webinars* sections.

Local government acknowledgement and acceptance of the Strategy will be an important step to confirm that the CSC participant is still committed to the CSC Program goals and principles and is a straightforward way to communicate expectations of the level and type of technical assistance that will be provided. It is not anticipated that any formal legislative approval will be necessary for the acceptance of this strategy, but should be approved based on established internal procedures.

Each local government's Custom Service Strategy will also include a defined timeline. Both short- and long-term strategies can be developed. All technical assistance strategies that are longer than six months will have at least one evaluation at the midway point to ensure that the strategy is still appropriate for the local government and delivering what is promised.

### **3. Anchor Projects and other Climate Protection Tool and Resource Development**

In addition to conducting In-Person Consultations with CSC participants, specific climate protection tools and resources will be developed to address the needs of the Mid-Hudson Region local governments. This approach will allow the entire VHB Team to maximize service and resource delivery to local governments, and will also facilitate collaboration and cooperation among local governments in the region. The Anchor Projects, proposed resources and webinars that will be developed by the VHB Team are as follows:

- **Anchor Projects** – the VHB Team will identify cutting-edge projects each year that are worthy of case studies. These projects can be already in progress or something that has been identified through the Mid-Hudson Regional Sustainability Plan that requires more in-depth research and discussion. All Anchor Projects will be displayed on the Mid-Hudson CSC Website.

- **Local Government Operations Greenhouse Gas Emission Inventory Tool** – this tool was completed in Year One and is being piloted by a county and town to work through any issues that may be identified by these diverse local governments. It is anticipated that the Tool, and a supplementary manual, will be ready for statewide use in winter 2014.
- **Guidebook on Conducting GHG Emissions Inventories** – this resource will provide the instructions necessary to complete a greenhouse gas emissions inventory and will include:
  - A Review of both Government Operations and Community GHG Emissions Inventories
  - Scopes, Sectors, Sources – general overview of what would typically be included in a Government or Community GHG Emissions Inventory
  - Recommended Protocols/Methods for conducting a GHG Emissions Inventory
  - Additional Resources to Reference throughout the process of conducting an Inventory
  - Templates for data collection, calculations and tracking data for future inventories
- **Guidebook for Creating a Climate Action Plan** – this guidebook will outline the necessary steps to creating a comprehensive Climate Action Plan, including:
  - A Plan Outline/Template
  - Strategies for Engaging the Community in Developing the Plan
  - How to Integrate the Results of the GHG Emissions Inventory
  - Example Climate Protection Strategies
- **Quick-Tip Sheets** – these are 1- to 2-page “cheat” sheets that can be provided to communities on topics that are frequently asked during the GHG emissions inventory and climate action planning processes. These quick-tip sheets will allow VHB to answer common questions quickly and efficiently.

***Greenhouse Gas Emissions Inventory Quick-Tip Sheets:***

- How to Choose a Baseline Year
- Forecasting Emissions – Should we do it? How? What is a BAU scenario?
- Deciding on Approach and Parameters for Your Inventory
- Linking Energy Baseline Assessments with GHG Inventories
- So Where Do I Get the Data? Tips for data sources and likely staff resources
- Choosing Emissions Factors
- Reporting
- Quality Control
- Replicating the GHG Emissions Inventory in Future Years – How to Track your Progress

***Climate Action Planning Quick-Tips Sheets:***

- Target Setting for Climate Action Plans
- Identifying Metrics and Tracking Implementation Progress

#### **4. Education: Trainings and Webinars**

To complement the one-on-one assistance to the CSC participants, VHB will host in-person trainings and online webinars focused on the interests and needs of the local governments. The various trainings and webinar options are presented in the following sections.

***Trainings***

VHB is proposing to host between two and four in-person trainings in the Mid-Hudson Region in Years Two and Three. The trainings will be designed to provide detailed guidance on climate protection topics and may include: Conducting a Local

Government Operations GHG Emissions Inventory, Conducting a Vulnerability Assessment, and How to Engage the Public in Climate Protection Activities (see Table 1 for additional potential training topics). The trainings that are scheduled will align with the research the VHB Team has conducted about the needs of the CSC participants, the survey responses, and the results of the In-Person Consultations. The goal is to meet the needs of as many CSC participants as possible. The trainings will be eligible for continuing education credits and will be organized to accommodate the three primary learning styles: 1) listening; 2) seeing; and 3) experiencing. Trainings that are provided in Years Two and Three will build upon the topics presented in Year One and be designed to continue to support CSC efforts to achieve pledge elements.

**Webinars**

The VHB Team will coordinate with NYSDEC, NYSERDA and the other Climate Smart Communities Regional Coordinators to schedule webinars according to need as well as during specific months that align with the subject matter (e.g., October is Energy Awareness Month, April is National Volunteer Month, and Earth Day is in April). In Year One, VHB participated in the following webinars: 1) Conducting a Vulnerability Assessment and Developing a Climate Adaptation Plan; 2) Developing a Climate Action Plan; and 3) Planning for Renewable Energy and Smart Grid Technology. Years Two and Three will include webinar topics that continue to advance the climate protection efforts of the CSC participants.

Webinars mostly accommodate the listening and seeing learning styles and are meant to provide a broader overview of a topic, while still delivering the necessary information a local government needs to apply the lessons learned. In addition to the traditional, listen-only webinar format, VHB is proposing to host more engaging webinars that allow attendees to interact with one another and the presenters before, during and after the webinar via email and online collaboration tools (such as Google Docs, Stixy, bubbl.us, and Dappleboard).

**Table 1: Potential CSC Trainings and Webinars**

POTENTIAL TOPIC	WEBINAR OR TRAINING
Conducting a Vulnerability Assessment and Preparing a Climate Adaptation Plan	<b>TRAINING</b>
Maximizing Building Efficiency	<b>BOTH</b>
How to Develop a Climate Action Plan	<b>TRAINING</b>
Creating an Effective Implementation Strategy	<b>WEBINAR</b>
Funding Your Climate Protection Work – Exploring Funding Options and Tips on Proposal Writing	<b>WEBINAR</b>
Applying the Regional GHG Emissions Inventory to Your Community and the Local Government Operations Protocol	<b>BOTH</b>
Engaging Volunteers in Local Climate Protection and Sustainability Efforts	<b>WEBINAR</b>
Vehicle Fleet Efficiency & Integration of Alternative Fuel Vehicles	<b>WEBINAR</b>



### **WORKING WITH KEY PARTNERS AND EXPERTS**

Partners and experts are going to play an important role in this project. Partners and experts include existing stakeholders that are working in the region to support and advance climate protection efforts in the Mid-Hudson Region. These can be non-profit organizations like Sustainable Hudson Valley, state agencies like the NYSDEC Hudson River Estuary Program, quasi-governmental organizations like the Hudson Valley Regional Council, and academic institutions like Pace University and Vassar College.

In addition to providing expertise on specialized climate protection issues to some of the more “advanced” CSC participants, VHB anticipates their assistance in promoting the CSC Program and providing insight on recruitment opportunities. The specific roles we anticipate these partners playing include:

- Attending “Meet the Expert” meetings. These are one-on-one meetings with local governments to assist them in resolving a specific technical issue. This meeting would occur after their in-person consultation and be part of their service delivery.
- Providing expert advice and guidance on “advanced” climate protection questions and inquiries
- Staying in touch with local and regional events that we can promote to the CSC participants
- Directing VHB to relevant local and regional resources
- Presenting at trainings and webinars
- Posting updates to their respective social media outlets on the program and “spotlighting” community efforts through their networks
- Recruiting new CSC participants

A complete list of key partners and experts are included in the Mid-Hudson marketing strategy.

### **TRACKING AND REPORTING**

Throughout the Climate Smart Communities Coordinator Pilot Program, the VHB Team will work with NYSERDA, NYSDEC and other state agencies, as well as other regional coordinators, to share best practices and lessons learned and to provide feedback and evaluation of the program while it is being implemented.

The VHB Team will also comply with all reporting requirements established by NYSERDA including the quarterly conference calls. The team will submit annual reports summarizing the successes and challenges of the CSC program and will include recommendations for modifications to the program moving forward.

In addition to the required reporting elements, VHB is proposing to provide updates to NYSERDA on the following:

- List of communities that have received an In-Person Consultation
- Progress of each community in accomplishing specific pledge elements
- Posts and activity on Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn and the Mid-Hudson CSC Website
- Conferences and events attended and presented at
- Promotion of the CSC Program through various media outlets
- Participants on trainings and webinars
- Number of communities interacted with (calls, meetings, workshops attended, etc.) and how often