

Climate Action Plan Implementation and Engagement



Town of Brentwood, Maryland

Project Team: University of Maryland Environmental Finance Center and Town of Brentwood

Funding Amount: \$50,707



Project Summary

This project empowered the Brentwood community with the knowledge, tools, and opportunities needed to understand and address local climate risks, while building long-term resilience through education, engagement, and action. The project team provided suggestions to the external parties developing the Town's Climate Action Plan (CAP) and designed outreach methods and materials to engage underrepresented residents—particularly Spanish-speaking/Latinx communities and those living in multi-unit housing—in climate adaptation activities. Through community events, nature-based education, and bilingual engagement, the project increased climate awareness and promoted environmental stewardship. Town Public Works Department staff received a customized training on green infrastructure design and maintenance, supporting institutional capacity for developing and maintaining climate-resilient practices. The Town administration and public safety departments, and Mayor and Council Members received a customized training on budgeting for climate adaptation and resilience to build institutional capacity. The project also advanced two adaptation projects likely to be prioritized in the CAP, including conceptual design of a green infrastructure project and development of supporting materials for funding applications to pursue adaptation and energy projects.

Additional Collaborators

Nature Forward

Brentwood Green Team

Prince George's Audubon Society

Brentwood Native Plant Network

Brentwood Tree Committee

Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission (MNCPPC)

Project Goals



Engage diverse community members in implementing Climate Action Plan strategies.



Educate community members on local climate risks and actions they can take to increase personal and community resilience.



Build skills and capacity of local government to foster a culture of climate resilience.

Project Timeline

Months 1-5

Planned staff & leadership trainings; drafted plan for engagement

Months 5-9

Met with CAP developers; trained Town staff

Months 10-12

Developed outreach materials and conceptual designs; prioritized projects for funding applications

Community Challenges



Extreme Heat

Rising temperatures and extreme heat events create serious health risks particularly in areas lacking tree canopy with vulnerable populations such as seniors.



Flooding and Stormwater Impacts

A significant portion of Brentwood (approximately 66%) properties are within current FEMA-designated flood zones without accounting for future risks. Additionally, the stormwater system is strained and needs further study, adaptation, and maintenance to handle future heavy rain events.



Barriers to Community Participation

Many residents face financial constraints and are under-reached in public planning and climate resilience efforts. Engaging underrepresented residents in climate action planning is crucial to implementation success.

Project Approach

This project prepared the Town to move from climate planning to implementation by supporting engagement, capacity building, and project development concurrently with the CAP timeline.

- ★ **Early coordination with Climate Action Plan process:** Participating in consultant-led meetings ensured alignment with emerging priorities and a smooth transition to implementation.
- ★ **Education and stewardship through events:** Preliminary outreach at local events featured bilingual, hands-on nature and climate education for all ages to build awareness and support.
- ★ **Targeted staff & leadership training:** Green infrastructure training prepared Town staff to maintain these solutions, and a climate leadership workshop built the capacity of staff and elected leaders to make climate-resilient budgeting and planning decisions.
- ★ **Culturally responsive engagement strategy:** The team developed a communications outreach plan tailored to Brentwood, piloted it during community events, and refined it based on feedback to guide future engagement.
- ★ **Advancing priority projects:** The team analyzed sites, developed conceptual designs, coordinated stakeholders, and prepared funding application materials for priority projects.

Impact

Community members gained an increased understanding of local climate risks, especially about the impacts of flooding and extreme heat. Culturally sensitive outreach and bilingual education strategies prepared the Town to strengthen its connections with under-represented residents. The outreach and engagement toolkit will support expanded community stewardship of their future resilience. Municipal staff gained capacity to support implementation and maintenance of green infrastructure solutions, as well as tools for incorporating climate resilience into the Town's budgeting and decision-making processes.

Next Steps

- Advance priority adaptation projects by pursuing funding sources.
- Continue to deeply engage community members with implementation of the Climate Action Plan.