

# Climate Smart Communities Certification Program



## *Documentation Submittal Form*

### **Instructions:**

Complete this form for each action in which you are submitting documentation to receive points. List all relevant documentation in the fields below for the action. For actions with multiple documents to be submitted, only one form per action is required.

### **Local Government: Town of Cortlandt**

**Action # and Name:** 11.1 Implement a new innovative action

**Document(s) Submitted** *(list the titles and year released for all documents submitted, or include links to relevant websites with a title and date accessed for the website or webpage)*

11-1 Dept Head survey May 2009  
11-1 Dept Survey report 2009  
11-1 Dept Head survey Feb 2010  
11-1 Dept Survey report June 2010

**Summary of Document(s) Submitted** *(Explain why the submitted document(s) meet the requirements for the action. Note any specific pages in the document in which the required information can be found, if only a portion of the document is relevant for the action).*

The town took an innovative approach to integrating sustainable practices into the culture of town government. It began with a 25x12 campaign to reduce energy consumption by 25% by 2012 in town government. The process included department head surveys (including a follow-up after one year) as well as hour long meetings with department staff to “listen” to their ideas about how to operate more sustainably in their jobs. The results were presented to all town staff at a kick-off event in 2009, and staff volunteered for the green team (30+ in the beginning) encouraging staff to work across departments on various committees toward green initiatives.

The process of engaging all staff through surveys and one to one interviews undoubtedly has led to culture change and very green operations that have measurably reduced emissions and saved money for the Town of Cortlandt.

In the spring of 2009, an on-line survey was sent to ALL staff to gather feedback on how business is done in their work area and to elicit ideas on how to make improvements that would help the environment and save money. The survey was followed up with hour-long face-to-face meetings with

department staff, using the survey as a conversation tool.

The information that resulted from these sessions was incredibly valuable. It identified redundant practices and opportunities for shared services. Some departments were very eco-conscious and had switched to systems that generated minimal waste, where others were farther behind. Certain themes like the need for a common kitchen were mentioned repeatedly. Lively discussions about saving energy, reducing waste, consolidating transportation routes, reducing paper and so much more came out of these meetings.

The process had many additional benefits. Staff members enjoyed the opportunity to share ideas and to be part of an important program that many felt passionate about. The interviewing process created a buzz around town government and by the time the last groups came in for interviews, they were well informed and bursting with ideas.

A follow-up survey was sent one year later in June 2010 revealing significant improvements across the board, including an 8% reduction in energy usage and a 66% reduction in purchased cases of copy paper in one year.

**Requested Points:** \_10\_ of \_10\_ points