

Re: NYS-DEC Climate Smart Communities City of Buffalo Climate Change Education & Engagement

The Buffalo Sewer Authority (BSA) has conducted significant community engagement efforts to gather neighborhood-level feedback on our Climate Change Vulnerability Assessment (CCVA) and generate opportunities for stakeholder participation in local climate resiliency efforts. Additional education about climate change in Buffalo, focusing on green infrastructure as an adaptation and mitigation strategy (e.g. decreasing GHG emissions, decreasing urban heat island effect, increasing community resilience), was provided through our outreach strategies including public presentations, distributing informational flyers, attending community events, and social media. The engagement and education efforts were supported by Buffalo Sewer's Community Engagement VISTA in partnership with the City of Buffalo's Project M.O.V.E., a Mayor Byron W. Brown AmeriCorps initiative within the City of Buffalo Division of Citizen Services.

The climate change education and engagement strategy was implemented as described below with the following results:

1. Coordinated between interdepartmental offices at the City of Buffalo and Buffalo Sewer Authority, the Climate Smart Buffalo Task Force, and the Erie County Community Climate Change Task Force to launch a community outreach and engagement strategy to inform the BSA Vulnerability Assessment as an extension of the Rain Check initiative.
2. Collaborated with the Climate Smart Buffalo Task Force and local government stakeholders to share status updates on the development of the CCVA and collect feedback from 12 community/local government partners.
3. Identified and connected with 52 community partners and organizations representative of high-risk populations vulnerable to the impacts of climate change or whose work supports vulnerable populations.
4. Developed outreach materials that describe green infrastructure as an opportunity for climate change adaptation and mitigation (e.g. flyers, website, presentations), and provided a public platform to generate community feedback (e.g. online survey).
5. Coordinated with community stakeholders to conduct 30 one-on-one interviews, participate in 16 public meetings and events reaching over 560 people, and disseminate surveys to community networks reaching 74 respondents across 22 zip codes.
6. Developed a website to communicate information about green infrastructure and climate change with public comment space: <https://raincheckbuffalo.org/climate-change/>.

Documentation of the education and engagement efforts that support the above implementation strategy are enclosed.

The Rain Check initiative is Buffalo Sewer's primary method to implement green infrastructure in the City of Buffalo. This initiative will reduce climate change vulnerability by addressing Buffalo's stormwater challenge, reducing combined sewer overflow events, decreasing the urban heat island effect, and sequestering greenhouse gases. Buffalo Sewer developed a Climate Change Vulnerability Assessment to inform the Rain

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Check initiative about best climate change resiliency strategies. This tool will assist the community in understanding Buffalo's susceptibility to the adverse impacts of climate change on various ecological, socioeconomic, public health, and infrastructural systems. This assessment was created with the City of Buffalo and Climate Smart Buffalo taskforce for New York's Climate Smart Communities program.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Oluwole A. McFoy', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Oluwole A. McFoy, P.E.
General Manager

Enclosures.