



Town of Harpswell
263 Mountain Road, Harpswell, ME 04079
207-833-5771

Community Resilience Self-Evaluation
September 15, 2022

Instructions: This tool is intended to help organize your community’s approach to increasing resilience to natural hazards and climate change impacts. Answer the questions to the best of your knowledge and seek information from your colleagues in municipal and county government and organizations in your community. Provide any relevant information in the explanation field. If it is difficult to give a clear yes or no response to a question, use the explanation field to explain why. **There are no wrong answers and the responses here will not affect your community’s eligibility to receive grants.** Where the response to a question is no, that may indicate an area of opportunity to address through a Community Action Grant.

Community name:	Town of Harpswell
Self-Evaluation responses provided by: Please include contact info	Mary Ann Nahf, Chair Harpswell Resiliency & Sustainability Committee Climate@town.harpswell.me.us
Date:	09/15/2022
Was this evaluation discussed during a community workshop? Include the date of the workshop.	Yes, 7/21/2022

Once the questions on the following pages are complete, use these prompts to identify potential next steps for your community:

What are two things your community is doing well?	Identifying vulnerabilities of sea level rise and seeking funding to assess degrees of vulnerability and costs to mitigate.
What are two areas that could be improved in the short-term?	Outreach to the public about climate change and learning more about our vulnerable population are priority areas.
What is important for your community to address in the long-term?	As we continue to identify needed improvements to vulnerable infrastructure, funding the execution of the improvements becomes critical.

What specific 3 to 5 actions are priorities for your community?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Reduce the carbon footprint of the Town office building.• Identify the need for future improvements to Town roads.• Develop and implement a comprehensive community information program about climate change.• Evaluate the potential for a Town-owned solar facility.• Identify the need for future improvements to Town piers, docks, and boat launches.

Minimizing Risk and Exposure to Hazards	
1) Has your community assessed the likelihood of various types of hazards or disruptive events?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Your local or county hazard mitigation plan is a good starting place to find this information. Hazards can include storms, floods, wind, fire, extreme temperatures, drought, etc. Likelihood could be indicated either numerically or qualitatively as low, medium, or high.	The Town's Emergency Operation Plan addresses various hazards and lays out a plan to handle such events. To increase capacity and to plan, the Town is partnering with the Southern Maine Resilience Group who is studying ways to recover from natural disasters on our most vulnerable populations.
2) Has your community assessed how the likelihood of each hazard has changed over time and may change in the future?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
If your community has not tracked trends historically, you might infer past trends by determining if current priorities have shifted compared to past hazard mitigation plans. For example, drought or wildfire might be an emerging concern.	The Town Conservation Commission has been monitoring and recording storm intensity and frequency around monthly king tides and their effects on vulnerable Town roads by the use of Picture Posts. A visual record with meta data is recorded in current time to a cloud data base viewable by our citizens.
3) Has your community assessed the impacts or consequences of each type of hazard for the community?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
For example, flooding on Main Street impedes emergency services or affects local businesses.	Assessed impacts of sea level rise on two Town landings and one Town road including the costs to keep subject locations usable to 3.3 ft of sea level rise. Locations to test were chosen by the number of people and businesses affected and the importance of Town boat landings for emergency services.
4) Is your community taking steps to reduce exposure to multiple risk types?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Your local or county hazard mitigation plan probably contains this information.	The Town adheres to the National Incident Management System (NIMS) and has protocols in place to handle various types of risks.
6) Is your community preparing for low-probability-but-high-consequence events?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
These events could be, for example, a 1-in-100 year flood, or a prolonged electricity	

<p>outage or heating fuel shortage. What events might the community need to consider?</p>	
<p>7) Has your community assessed the consequences of multiple events or different types of hazards occurring in geographic or temporal proximity?</p>	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No</p>
<p>Examples could include back-to-back flooding events or a power outage during a heat wave.</p>	<p>The Town faced an extended power outage and trees blocking roads following the Halloween Day rain and windstorm of 2017. Two weeks later another storm hit and the electrical poles along Bailey Island’s Cribstone Bridge blew down into coastal waters. There was a sharp temperature drop accompanying the second storm, leaving residents on Bailey Island without power or heat for a second time. The Town Selectboard and Administration advocated with the legislature for improved service from Central Maine Power (and other privately held utilities) leading to passage of a law requiring both restoration of power being done along with power restoration, improved communication with municipalities, increase direct service staff and improved accountability.</p>
<p>8) Is your community assessing emerging risks (e.g. drought, wildfire) and identifying blind spots?</p>	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No</p>
<p>In addition to natural hazards, consider public health threats that might be worsened by climate change, such as contamination of drinking water sources and vector-borne diseases from ticks and mosquitos.</p>	<p>The Emergency Management Agent/Fire Administrator maintains a regular ongoing awareness of emerging risks and moves forward with the help of Town Administration to draw attention to the problem and work toward mitigation.</p>

Understanding Sensitivity and Building Resilience

9) Is your community tracking underlying societal characteristics and trends that increase vulnerability?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
This information might be found in your community’s comprehensive plan or economic development plan. Examples of characteristics and trends might include older or low-income populations, low housing availability, reliance on a single economic driver, aging infrastructure, environmental degradation, etc.	Assessments are being undertaken of our older adults, the working waterfront communities, and local housing stock by local volunteers and non-profit organizations.
10) Is your community proactively addressing vulnerabilities associated with these underlying characteristics?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Look in your community’s comprehensive plan or economic development plan for strategies that might address these trends.	The Town Selectboard is assembling a task force to study lack of workforce housing, The Marine Resources Committee has relaxed residency requirements for license holding, and Harpswell Aging at Home is offering interactive programs and working with the older adult community
10) Does your community have financial resources in reserve to cope with or absorb shocks?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
For example, a rainy-day fund.	The Town has a Contingency Fund to handle emergencies.
12) Is your community building flexible human capacity that can be drawn on in emergencies?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
For example, community emergency response teams (CERT) or mutual aid agreements with neighboring communities.	The Town has a mutual aid agreement with Brunswick and other neighboring towns between our Fire and Rescue Departments .

Improving Long-term Adaptive Capacity

<p>13) Does your community have plans or policies that anticipate future climate risks and community sensitivity trends?</p>	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No</p>
<p>Examples might include a comprehensive plan chapter that describes how the community is planning for climate change impacts, or a capital improvement plan that requires construction projects to consider future conditions like sea level rise, extreme rain, or drought.</p>	<p>The Selectboard has instituted a standing Resiliency and Sustainability Committee and is adopting a Sustainability Plan that is looking at what actions it can take to foster the State strategies identified in the "Maine Won't Wait" Plan. It is reviewing capital road projects for climate change impacts.</p>
<p>14) Are there resources to sustain new capacity when needed?</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No</p>
<p>This is different from Question 10 in that these resources would need to sustain a new long-term commitment rather than a one-time, short-term response. For example, if flooding emerges as an issue, a revenue source such as a stormwater utility fee could sustain a new community stormwater management program.</p>	<p>The Town does not currently budget for resilience improvements and relies primarily on grants. The Sustainability Plan proposes establishing a capital improvement plan as the basis for ongoing funding.</p>
<p>15) Does the community have policies in place to build back smarter or recover with resilience after a disruptive event?</p>	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No</p>
<p>Examples might include a flood ordinance that requires compliance with the current building codes after substantial damage, or a communitywide post-disaster recovery plan.</p>	<p>The Town's Floodplain Management Ordinance requires reconstruction to conform to current standards. The assessments of sea level rise impacts on roads and wharfs/boat launches identify the improvements needed to withstand increased tide and storm levels.</p>
<p>16) Does the community stress test to ensure plausible risks are manageable?</p>	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No</p>
<p>This might be a table-top exercise with emergency management and community stakeholders, or a financial health analysis.</p>	<p>Harpwell is participating with the Southern Maine Resilience Group's Social Resilience Project and participated in the tabletop emergency preparedness workshop in January, 2022, and follow up webinars to work on reflections and next steps.</p>

17) Does the community have a policy or process for managing uncertainty?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Does the community have a way of making important decisions when information is incomplete or unavailable?	