

Community Resilience Partnership

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● Community Resilience Self-Evaluation

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 Blue Hill
Self-Evaluation responses provided by: Please include contact info	Jeff Milliken, Randy Curtis, Alice Cockerham, Hans Carlson, George Hurvitt, Charles Rolsky, Julie Atwell, Bryce Farnham, and Marcia McKeague
Date:	6/26/24
Was this evaluation discussed during a community workshop? Include the date of the workshop.	In September of 2023 an outdoor workshop was held at the Blue Hill Food Co-op followed by an evening review on priority setting. There were also numerous consultations by topic held by the Comprehensive Plan Committee during comp plan reviews each addressing related climate linkages. The Climate Resilience Committee meetings are held monthly discussing climate change related priorities. The Select Board regularly reviews priority climate related grant requests.

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?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Town has been proactive in planning, finding funding for, and beginning construction, to make its wastewater treatment plant resilient to sea level rise. • Undertaking a Climate Vulnerability Assessment being carried with the assistance of GEI Engineering and Gulf of Maine Research Institute financed by CRP funds and pursuing specific projects to address the identified vulnerabilities. Focus is on town owned buildings, the
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	wastewater treatment plant, fire station, hospital, and certain roads.
What are two areas that could be improved in the short-term?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop detailed plans for addressing Town roads exposed to sea level rise and storm damage. • Town-owned culvert sizing, tracking and maintenance.
What is important for your community to address in the long-term?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local road flooding <i>and closures, long & short term</i>, as a result of more extreme storms and sea-level rise. • The future of both Town-owned wharfs • Protecting the wastewater treatment plant via relocation of equipment or, worst case, the entire facility. • Water supply infrastructure • Forest Fire Prevention
What specific 3 to 5 actions are priorities for your community?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developing a plan with local land trusts, private woodlot owners, and the Town for best management practices and education around preventing wildfires. • Protecting the community's drinking water supply, including monitoring for contaminants like PFAs, etc. • Draw from the ongoing 18 month Climate Vulnerability Assessment study with GEI/GMRI and the new draft Comp Plan to establish plans to implement the priority recommendations of the Assessment as they relate to Blue Hill. • Continue to coordinate with other Peninsula towns' efforts to maximize scale economies, reduce duplication of effort, and promote coherent regional strategy.

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.	Explanation: Blue Hill Sea Level Rise Task Force issued a report in September 2020. Climate hazards have been identified by the draft Comp Plan submitted for state review in June 2024 and the ongoing Vulnerability Assessment report due December 2024.
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.	Explanation: See above.
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.	Explanation: All-weather, climate-ready operation of the wastewater treatment facility is vital for health care, emergency services, businesses and other civic entities. Similarly, several Town and State roads exposed to sea level rise are vital to resident and emergency services access.
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.	Explanation: Blue Hill has applied for congressionally directed funding and Northern Border Regional Commission funding and will apply for funding from other programs, e.g., Maine Infrastructure Adaptation Fund.
5) 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 outage or heating fuel shortage. What events might the community need to consider?	Explanation: If the Blue Hill Wastewater Treatment Plant were flooded and closed, that disruption of service would have significant negative local and regional consequences including the closing of the hospital, grocery stores, schools and retail, most of which the other 8 towns on the peninsula are dependent upon.
6) Has your community assessed the consequences of multiple events or different types of hazards occurring in geographic or temporal proximity?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No

Examples could include back-to-back flooding events or a power outage during a heat wave.	Explanation: See above.
7) Is your community assessing emerging risks (e.g. drought, wildfire) and identifying blind spots?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
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.	Explanation: The Town of Brooksville, on behalf of itself, Blue Hill and seven other towns, was awarded \$250,000 of Congressionally Directed Spending to commission preparation of a Community Wildfire Protection Plan for the Blue Hill Peninsula. Blue Hill's volunteer fire department and other community leaders will participate in this 18-month interlocal project. Adoption of the plan will qualify the towns to apply for follow-on implementation grants. PFAs testing in Blue Hill drinking water wells is also being conducted in partnership with the Shaw Institute.

Understanding Sensitivity and Building Resilience	
8) 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.	Explanation: This information is monitored and tracked by a range of official and informal organizations in the community, and there are active discussions around how to address these issues. In addition, Blue Hill has just completed updating our comprehensive plan, which required more formal attention to this information.
9) 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.	Explanation: See #8 above.
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.	Explanation: The Town has adopted a relatively conservative financial posture, incurring debt only for long-term infrastructure investments. However, the magnitude of future investment requirements will likely exceed our ability to borrow and/or will place an undue property tax burden on vulnerable residents.
11) 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.	Explanation: Blue Hill has mutual-aid agreements with adjacent towns, including Brooklin, Sedgwick, Surry and others. However, these resources, and the ambulance service serving the Peninsula, do not have substantial excess capacity for severe emergencies.
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Improving Long-term Adaptive Capacity

13) Does your community have plans or policies that anticipate future climate risks and community sensitivity trends?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
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.	Explanation: The Town will be factoring the results of the Dec 24 GEI/GMRI vulnerability study into its capital plans for Town infrastructure, including Town roads, the fire station, its two wharves, and the wastewater treatment plant. The updated comprehensive plan contains a chapter dedicated to future climate risks and community sensitivity trends, as well as a capital investment plan.
14) Are there resources to sustain new capacity when needed?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
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.	Explanation: Through both the League of Select Boards and Peninsula Tomorrow, Blue Hill is exploring available resources for long-term mitigation and adaptation. Re Enrollment in the Community Resilience Partnership will ensure greater intermunicipal planning, resource development and implementation.
15) Does the community have policies in place to build back smarter or recover with resilience after a disruptive event?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Examples might include a flood ordinance that requires compliance with the current building codes after substantial damage, or a communitywide post-disaster recovery plan.	Explanation: Other than the state-model floodplain management ordinance, the Town does not have additional requirements for private landowners. As noted earlier, for now, the Town itself informally seeks to “build back smarter” when damage to Town facilities is incurred.
16) Does the community stress test to ensure plausible risks are manageable?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
This might be a table-top exercise with emergency management and community stakeholders, or a financial health analysis.	Explanation: [National Incident Management Training is recommended for appropriate Town representatives.]
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?	Explanation: Developing the capacity to manage and address uncertainty will be one of the co-benefits of re-enrolling in the Community Resilience Partnership.
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