



**ONEIDA COUNTY
DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING**

Boehlert Center at Union Station
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ANTHONY J. PICENTE, JR.
County Executive
James J. Genovese II
Commissioner

Climate Smart Communities Task Force Meeting #8 - Minutes

May 1, 2026 at 10:00 AM

Oneida County Department of Planning
Conference Room, 3rd Floor, Union Station
321 Main St.
Utica, NY 13501

Introductions and Attendance

Chris Henry	Director of Project Management, Oneida County Department of Public Works
Matt Swinarski	Water Quality Technician, Oneida County Soil & Water Conservation District
Daniel Sharfarz	Co-Director of Energy Environment team, Cornell Cooperative Extension
Kristin Campbell	Chief Planner, Oneida County Department of Planning
Amy Heiderich	Senior Planner, Oneida County Department of Planning
Grace Whiffen	Planner, Oneida County Department of Planning
Hanna Sauberan	Planner, Oneida County Department of Planning

The meeting opened at 10:00 AM by Kristin Campbell, speaking on behalf of the Climate Smart Communities Task Force Coordinator, James Genovese. Everyone introduced themselves and the agency or department they represent.

Greenhouse Gas Emissions Inventory - Oneida County Government Oneida County Governmental Operations

- J.P. Dillion finished the data collection, and he, along with Grace Whiffen and Hanna Sauberan, worked on a draft report.
- The report is currently being designed and will be completed and released by next week, the week of May 4th.
- The final report will be posted onto the Oneida County Department of Planning website, and it will be circulated among the Task Force members.

Climate Smart Communities Certification – Update and Deadline

- After the Greenhouse Gas Emissions Inventory is posted, the Oneida County Planning staff will submit the application for the bronze certification.
- Once Oneida County gets the bronze certification, more points will be awarded for certain grant applications, and more grant opportunities will become available.

- Chris Henry asked if points are awarded in the CFA for CSC certification. K. Campbell responded that a handful of points are awarded based on whether the communities are certified bronze versus silver.
- Amy Heiderich explained that NYSEDA is rebooting the Clean Energy Communities program. Points are awarded for high impact actions, and those points get turned into funding for projects. Some actions on the CSC application are contingent upon receiving a certificate from NYSEDA saying the community has completed a high impact action. Many actions revolve around community outreach, campaigns, and training. Oneida County is a Clean Energy Community and has received \$5,000 in grant funding through the program.
- G. Whiffen reviewed the actions within the CSC application to see what has been submitted into the portal and what needs updating. Some submission materials are technically outdated because it requests materials from the past year. G. Whiffen and H. Sauberman will meet next week to go through the materials and see what needs to be updated and uploaded.
 - There are twelve more EV charging stations that are active on Airline Street, which will need to be updated in the application. The goal is to use the stations for fleet charging in the future.
 - Daniel Sharfarz asked what is the charging speed on these stations. A. Heiderich said they are Level 2 and take about four hours to fully charge. They are all on ChargePoint, which will make the public aware of it.
 - K. Campbell asked if they charge money to use them and A. Heiderich said not at the moment, but they are working on the pricing structure with ChargePoint.
 - D. Sharfarz asked if any charging stations are going to be constructed at CCE. A. Heiderich said there was, but the construction timeline didn't align with the grant timeline.
- G. Whiffen and H. Sauberman will complete a list of documents that are needed for the application and send it to K. Campbell and A. Heiderich by May 8th.

Open Forum

- D. Sharfarz said CCE is plugging away on their grants. He also mentioned a grant with NYSEDA called Amp Up (Affordable Multifamily Program Update) that CCE was invited to participate in. NYSEDA tasked them with recruiting at least seven multi-family building owners to participate to award \$10,000 per unit to help with energy efficient upgrades.
- D. Sharfarz also asked if we receive bonus points for battery energy storage capacity. Battery storage is not on the list of CSC actions but may be added in the next update.
- C. Henry said DPW is working to get a generator at 5999 Judd Road. A. Heiderich asked if EV charging stations at MVCC were moved, and C. Henry said more than likely due to the construction, but he was unsure where the new location is. DPW will possibly work on the REA building at Union Station.

- A. Heiderich asked if the fleet rightsizing was complete. C. Henry said it's a work in progress. Some rightsizing has been completed, but he doesn't know if there have been any net changes.
- There was a discussion on looking at utilizing electric cars in certain departments to cut out mileage expenses. More research is needed to look at car usage across different departments and the cost difference between charging and mileage reimbursement. An inventory could possibly be completed for silver certification.
 - For fleet vehicles, Oneida County will need to look into electric vehicles being on state contract.
- Matt Swinarski said SWCD has been working on culvert replacements and bank stabilization projects. K. Campbell said possible CSC actions that relate to the work of SWCD include watershed-based plans, green infrastructure, riparian buffers, culvert rightsizing, nature-based shorelines, and watershed plans for water quality.
 - Culvert replacements are taking place in Ava and there is a culvert to bridge project in Boonville.

Next meeting will be September 11, 2026, at 10:00 am.

Adjournment