

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:	Eliot
Self-Evaluation responses provided by: Please include contact info	Jeff Brubaker, Planner, Eliot jbrubaker@eliotme.org (207) 439-1813 x112
Date:	9/7/2022
Was this evaluation discussed during a community workshop? Include the date of the workshop.	A work session with 16 participants was held on 8/3/2022 – primarily municipal board representatives and staff, with some community members as well

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?	-Reducing municipal energy consumption/carbon footprint -Growing capacity for community support (e.g., Eliot Connects, Aging in Place committee)
What are two areas that could be improved in the short-term?	-Incorporate assessment of hazards and associated recommendations in the Comprehensive Plan update that is currently underway. -Improve communication of hazard preparedness information (e.g., shelters, evacuation routes, supplies) to residents.
What is important for your community to address in the long-term?	-Building volunteer capacity/coordination during hazards -Reducing underlying vulnerabilities (e.g., housing availability / affordability) -Shoreline erosion -Impacts to drinking water and septic systems
What specific 3 to 5 actions are priorities for your community?	Better risk assessment, hazard preparedness information, education on climate change mitigation, cooling/heating centers. See Action Plan spreadsheet for more details.

Minimizing Risk and Exposure to Hazards	
1) Has your community assessed the likelihood of various types of hazards or disruptive events?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" 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.	<p>Explanation: York County has a Hazard Mitigation Plan (recently updated in July 2022) that encompasses Eliot, but it would help to have a more detailed assessment/plan for Eliot. Is there a flood evacuation plan specifically? If there is a plan, does the community know? Need to assess the likelihood of each hazard (e.g., storms, floods, hurricanes, Seabrook nuclear power plant issue). Need to look more regionally (e.g., thinking about evacuation route connections to NH, land uses on the NH side of the river, sharing resources for emergency response).</p> <p>Town Hall, PD, and FD have generators (coordinating centers). Communications in an emergency. York County Emergency Mgmt. Fire Chief is emergency management director for Eliot.</p> <p>Other impacts of concern mentioned in the 8/3/22 worksession: shoreline erosion, vegetative changes and invasive species, changes in weather patterns (e.g. more volatile weather patterns, hot/dry summers, droughts, less snow in winter, more high-water events in winter), vulnerability, power outages, impacts to drinking water and septic systems, sea level rise</p>
2) Has your community assessed how the likelihood of each hazard has changed over time and may change in the future?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" 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: No. We do have some information about sea-level rise from the York River Wild and Scenic Study. Do we have SLR data? Incorporate into Comprehensive Plan Update and consider adding to town's GIS.
3) Has your community assessed the impacts or consequences of each type of hazard for the community?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
For example, flooding on Main Street impedes emergency services or affects local businesses.	Explanation: York County Hazard Mitigation Plan provides some information but Eliot would benefit from a more specific assessment.
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: York County Hazard Mitigation Plan addresses some of this but again would benefit from identification of more specific steps for Eliot. The partnership for this project will help.

<p>5) Is your community preparing for low-probability-but-high-consequence events?</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No</p>
<p>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?</p>	<p>Explanation: Lots of ideas for improving this preparedness. We have had prolonged electricity outages (e.g., high wind events/ice storms), putting the county at a standstill. Probably no in terms of preparation but could draw from nearby communities' experiences. High wind and ice events motivated people to buy generators; but resources are needed to help many members of our community. For example, need to consider renters and people with income challenges – use community resources to provide low-cost energy back-up/storage for people. Also consider people without access to water when power is out. Other age-friendly communities have developed lists of the most at-risk people to call/check on when storms happen.</p>
<p>6) Has your community assessed the consequences of multiple events or different types of hazards occurring in geographic or temporal proximity?</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No</p>
<p>Examples could include back-to-back flooding events or a power outage during a heat wave.</p>	<p>Explanation: Where would people go if there was flooding impeding travel or a town-wide power outage? High school is certified as an emergency shelter.</p>
<p>7) Is your community assessing emerging risks (e.g. drought, wildfire) and identifying blind spots?</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" 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>Explanation: Some coverage in the York County Hazard Mitigation Plan (e.g., drought and wildfire) but need more assessment/preparation for Eliot. Not much on public health in the Hazard Mitigation Plan.</p> <p>Other concerns mentioned during the 8/3/22 worksession: need to address the public health implications of extreme heat (e.g. establishing cooling centers, or heating centers in winter); increasing numbers of ticks and other pests</p>

<p style="text-align: center;">Understanding Sensitivity and Building Resilience</p>	
<p>8) Is your community tracking underlying societal characteristics and trends that increase vulnerability?</p>	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No</p>
<p>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.</p>	<p>Explanation: Eliot is making some steps on this (e.g., Aging in Place community). 24% of the town is elderly. Comprehensive Plan update could be an opportunity to improve this assessment/tracking going forward. Focus on transportation for seniors to go to the grocery store. Aging infrastructure, housing availability.</p>

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: Eliot is taking some steps (e.g., the property tax assistance program for seniors, ADUs); Comprehensive Plan update represents an opportunity to identify other proactive strategies to address more of these vulnerabilities.
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: Town has robust rainy-day fund, but whether we have sufficient financial resources depends on the size/type of the event. For example, a major hurricane coming through would be a big punch to our town; houses destroyed – that would be a shock.
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: We need a list of individuals who may be vulnerable in an extreme event. We could put together that list and project where the needs are going to be the greatest. That could inform volunteering, particularly at a neighborhood scale. Develop a list of volunteers with different capacities. Eliot Connects is an important and growing resource/network for our community. Knowing who the emergency response teams/neighborhood contacts are and having people in place, meeting regularly, trained, etc. Don’t think we have formal CERT program. Fire Department already shares resources with neighboring communities when needed. Not sure if there are other mutual aid opportunities/needs.

Improving Long-term Adaptive Capacity	
12) Does your community have plans or policies that anticipate future climate risks and community sensitivity trends?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" 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: No – Comprehensive Plan Update is an opportunity to make some progress on this. We don’t have a distinct climate action plan.
13) Are there resources to sustain new capacity when needed?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No

<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>Explanation: Eliot does not have a stormwater utility. Long-range planning for these resources.</p>
<p>14) Does the community have policies in place to build back smarter or recover with resilience after a disruptive event?</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" 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>Explanation: Eliot has a floodplain management ordinance. We don't have a community-wide post-disaster recovery plan, but it would be a good thing to have, along with greening building codes should we need to rebuild. We have adopted the 2015 building code version but not yet the 2021 version.</p>
<p>15) Does the community stress test to ensure plausible risks are manageable?</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" 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>Explanation: There may be some exercises done by emergency management personnel but not with broader community stakeholders.</p>
<p>16) Does the community have a policy or process for managing uncertainty?</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No</p>
<p>Does the community have a way of making important decisions when information is incomplete or unavailable?</p>	<p>Explanation: Not specifically.</p>