



Town of Austerlitz Climate Action Progress Report

April 2025

The Town of Austerlitz Climate Smart Communities Task Force is pleased to present this progress report on our ongoing efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and implement climate-friendly policies throughout our community. This report covers significant achievements and initiatives from the past year. For a full list of progress to date, please visit the Climate Committee's website, where we outline all of [Our Work](#).

Major Milestones Achieved

Climate Smart Communities Bronze Recertification

In summer 2024, the Town of Austerlitz was recertified as a bronze-level Climate Smart Community, gaining 65 additional points by accomplishing 7 additional actions in the Climate Smart Communities program.

Community-Wide Greenhouse Gas Inventory

In June 2024, we completed a comprehensive Community-wide Greenhouse Gas Inventory that provides a baseline snapshot of all emissions generated within the bounds of the Town of Austerlitz from residential and commercial energy, transportation, and waste. This crucial document:

- Identified our total emissions of 12,991 MTCO₂e
- Determined that on-road transportation (56.8%), residential energy (24.7%), and solid waste (12.4%) are our largest emission sources
- Establishes a foundation for our community climate action planning process and future emissions reduction targets

Clean Energy Communities Program Advancement and GHG Reductions in Government Operations

Austerlitz has advanced in the Clean Energy Communities program to attain 5,000 points, making us eligible for a \$100,000 grant, for which we were awarded. The Town intends to use these funds to purchase an electric vehicle for the Highway Dept, thus reducing greenhouse gases from municipal operations, as outlined as a goal in the Town's [Municipal Climate Action](#)

[Plan](#). The Climate Action Plan outlines the GHG Inventory results and establishes goals for reducing GHG emissions from government operations.

Climate Adaptation and Resilience Plan

We completed our participation in the County-wide Climate Change Adaptation and Resilience Plan with Cornell Cooperative Extension in March 2024, and are working toward town adoption of this plan.

Key Programs and Initiatives

Waste Reduction Campaign

Our comprehensive waste reduction efforts include:

- Zero Waste Resources promotion
- Reuse, Recycle, Repurpose and Give-away resources to keep solid waste out of our local landfill
- Composting education for rural residents
- Continued collaboration with Columbia NE Repair Café consortium (held 6 Repair Cafes in collaboration with 4 towns)
- Partnership with Greenagers for compost bins and conservation trails

Clean Heating and Cooling Campaign

We conducted a successful campaign encouraging residents to switch to heat pumps, leading to 16 new heat pump installations by residents.

Electric Vehicle Promotion

In April 2024, we launched a campaign encouraging residents to purchase electric vehicles to reduce transportation emissions, which represent our largest emissions sector.

CURE100 Carbon Calculator Implementation

We installed an app on our local climate action website that enables residents to assess their carbon footprint and pledge to reach net zero by 2040, with a specific Spring-Summer 2025 campaign targeting a 5% reduction in individual carbon footprints.

Energy Reduction Campaign

In June 2024, we hosted an informational event on how residents can reduce their energy use and work together as a community to meet greenhouse reduction targets, featuring presentations on residential solar installation options and other energy-saving opportunities.

Grant Funding Success

Through our climate initiatives, we have successfully secured multiple grants:

- \$1,500 grant from Berkshire Taconic Foundation for planning board and code enforcement training
- \$5,000 grant from NYSERDA for a native plant demonstration garden and sustainable playground equipment
- \$10,000 grant from NYSERDA for energy improvements (town highway garage audit, heat pumps for history center)
- Awarded a \$100,000 NYSERDA grant after achieving over 5,000 points in the Clean Energy Communities Program

Policy Achievements

- Made significant contributions to the Town of Austerlitz's comprehensive plan, successfully advocating for several "green" modifications that were adopted and will influence future town policy and law
- Successfully proposed a town resolution in support of NY State's Packaging Reduction and Recycling Infrastructure Act Support, which the town passed

Next Steps for 2025

As we look toward achieving Silver certification in the Climate Smart Communities program, we will focus on:

- Implementing Comprehensive Plan Sustainability elements including:
 - Smart Growth Zoning Laws
 - Planning and Infrastructure for Biking and Walking
 - Alternative Fuel Infrastructure
 - Zoning for Protection of Natural Areas
- Developing a formal Community Climate Action Plan based on our Greenhouse Gas Inventory
- Continuing our progress in the Climate Smart Communities and Clean Energy Communities programs
- Expanding community engagement through our CURE100 app and other outreach initiatives

The Town of Austerlitz is committed to reducing our greenhouse gas emissions as outlined in the Town's [Climate Action Plan](#). Our government operations have already established a target of

40% reduction by 2030 and 85% reduction by 2040, and we are working to engage our entire community in this vital effort.

For more information or to get involved, please visit austerlitzclimateaction.org.

This report is based on documentation submitted for the Climate Smart Communities Silver Certification process and was prepared by the Town of Austerlitz Climate Smart Communities Task Force.