

Climate Resilience Workshop

Town of New Gloucester

May 21, 2026

Agenda

- Vulnerability Assessment
- Upcoming grant funding
- Resilient Yards
- Energy Efficiency



Overview

2023

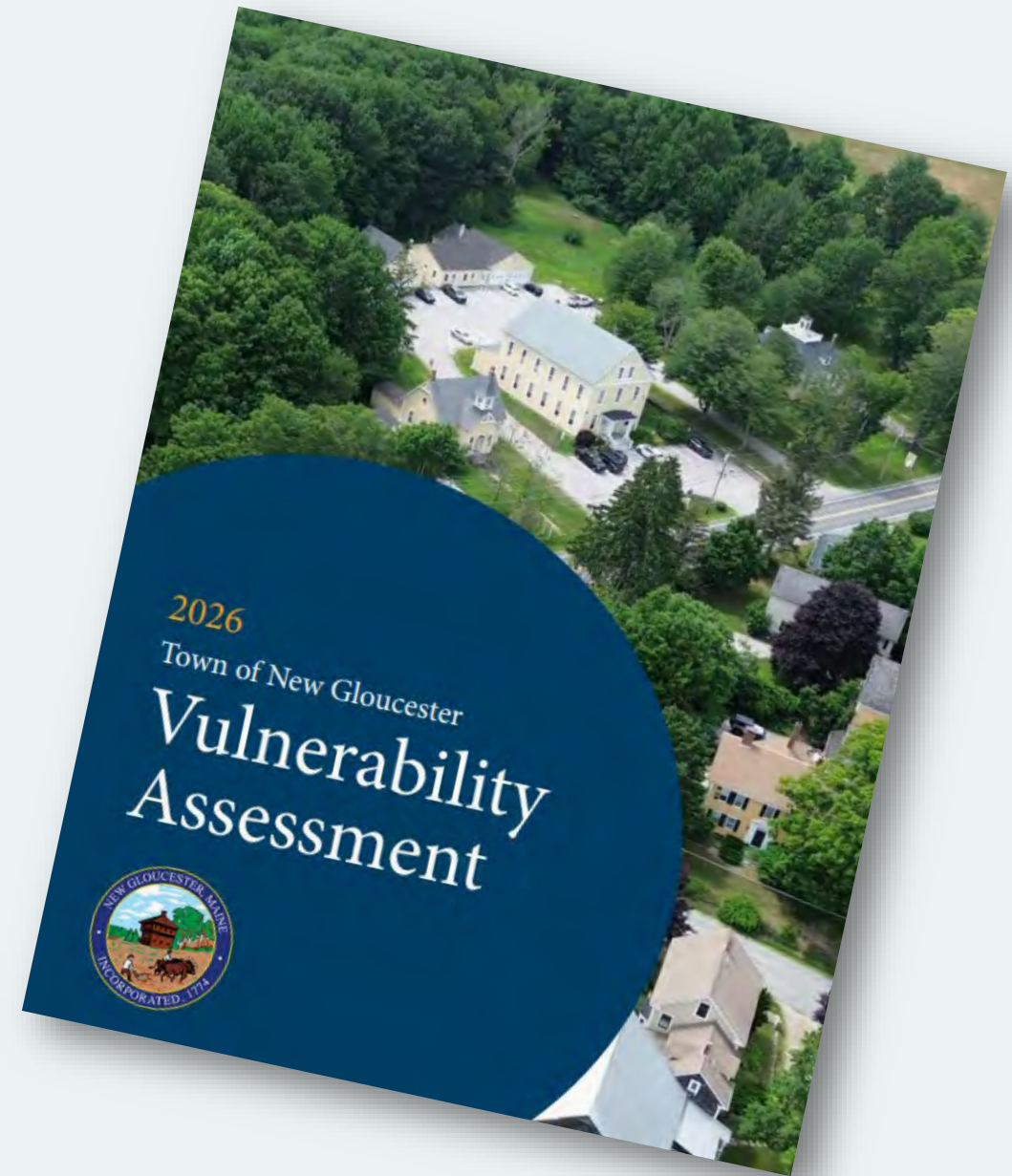
Enrolled in the **Community Resilience Partnership**

2024

Received grant to work with GPCOG to complete the **New Gloucester Community Risk Assessment and Resilience Engagement Project**

2026

Select Board approved the **Vulnerability Assessment**

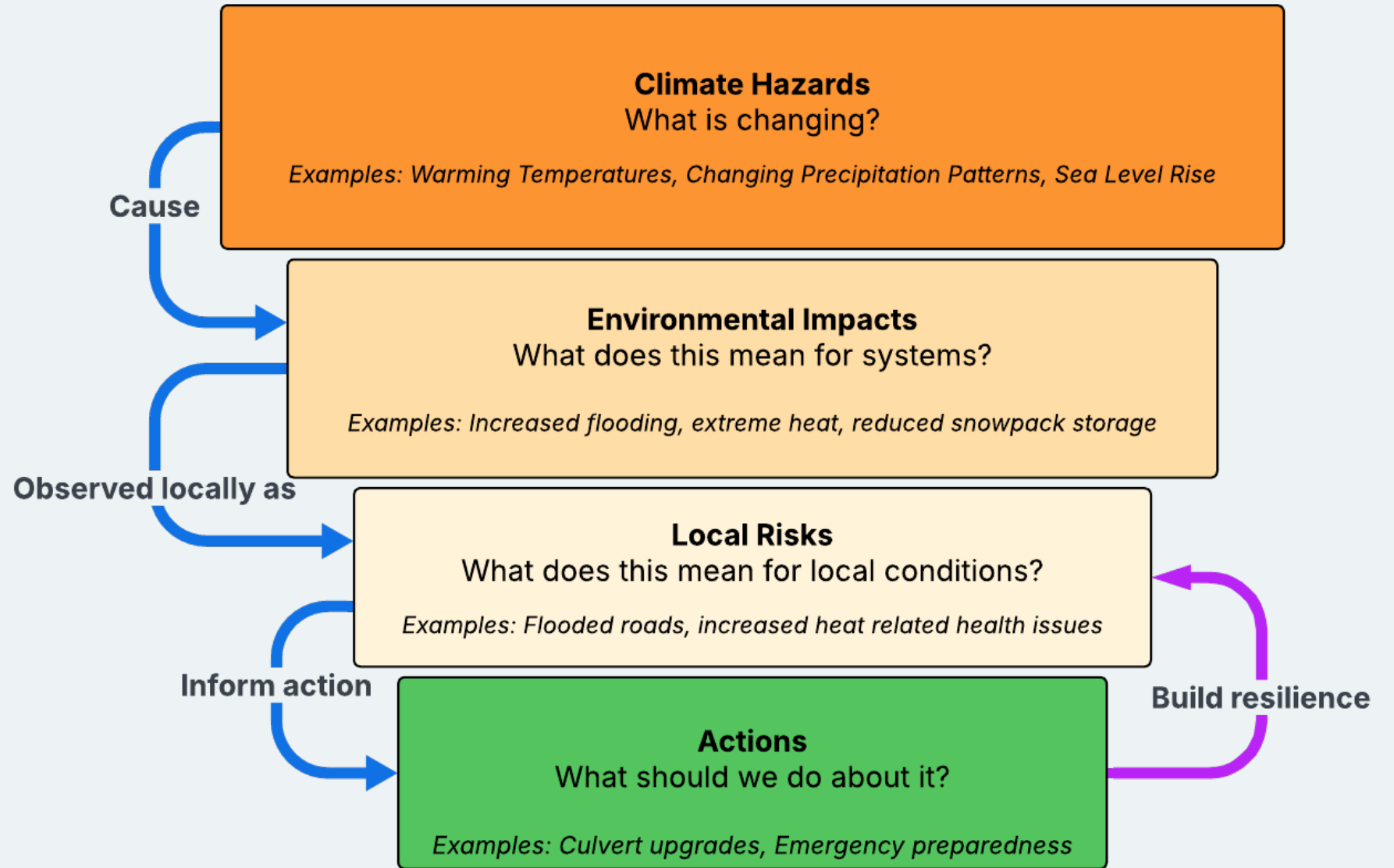


Climate Vulnerability Assessment

- Assess areas most at risk of impacts from climate hazards
- Identify resources which need additional research or assessment
- Prioritize areas of action (funding, resources, time, capacity)
- Build resilience



Process



Climate Hazards

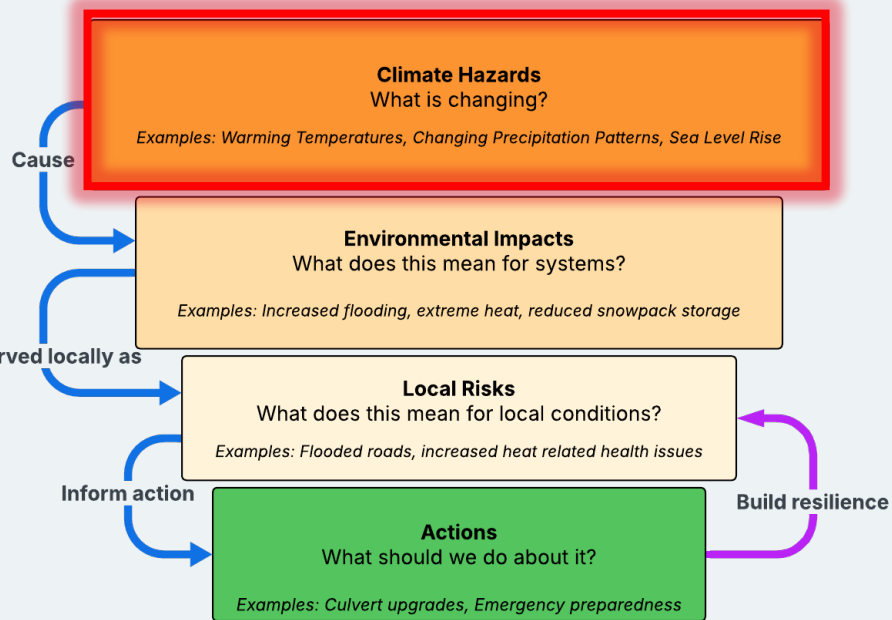


Warmer, more variable temperatures

Changing precipitation patterns



Changing marine conditions



Resources Analyzed



Infrastructure

Transportation

Buildings

Water Utilities

Power and Communications



Natural Resources

Ecosystems

Water Resources

Erosion

Open Space and Conserved Lands

Land Use, Forests, Carbon Sinks



Community Resources

Economy

Essential Services

Social Services

Agriculture and Food Systems

Trails, Parks and Recreation

Archeological and Historic Sites



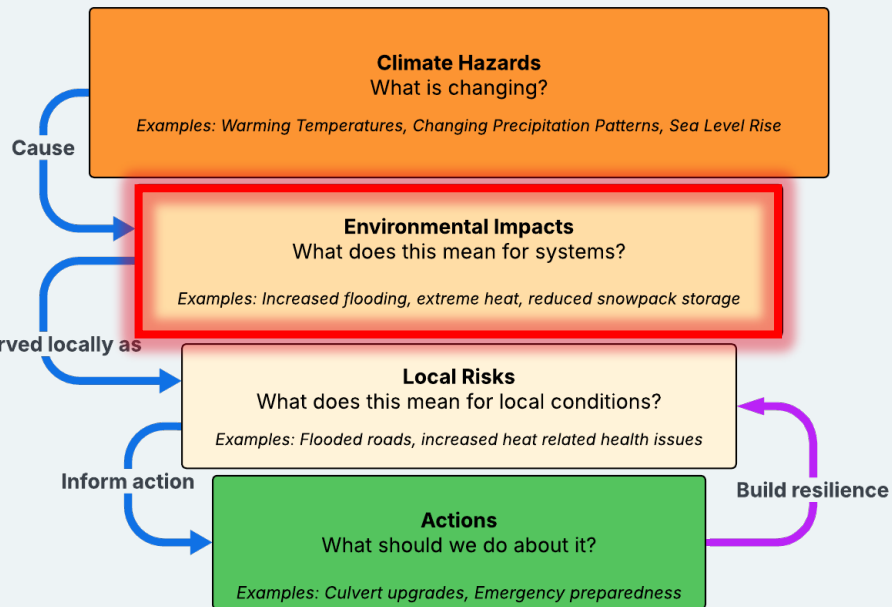
People

Demographics

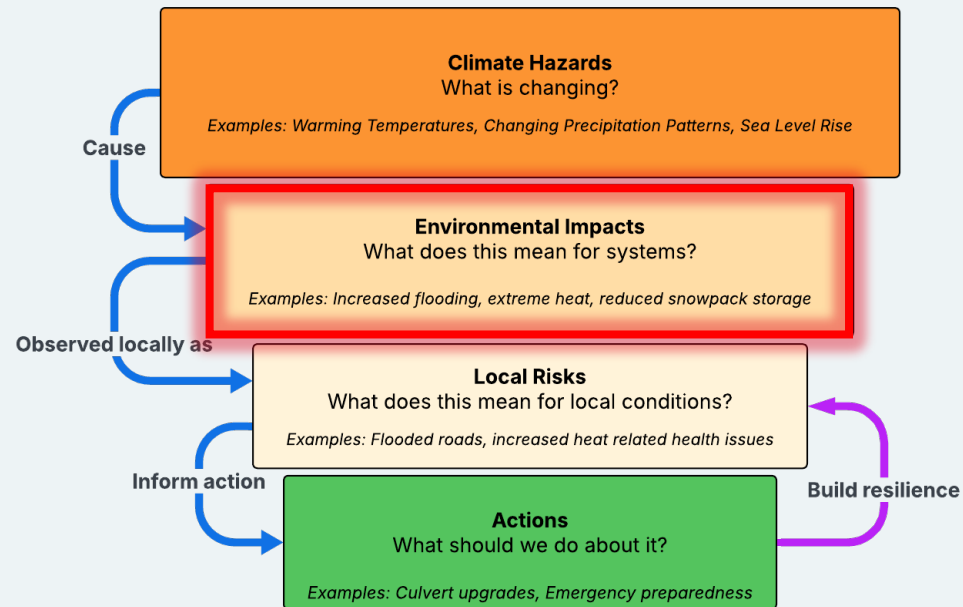
Socioeconomic

Housing

Public Health



Impacts



- Decreased water quality
- Stress on wildlife
- Ecosystem disruption
- Agriculture damage



- Heat-related illnesses
- Vector-borne diseases
- Worsening air quality
- Strain on community resources
- Increased social inequity

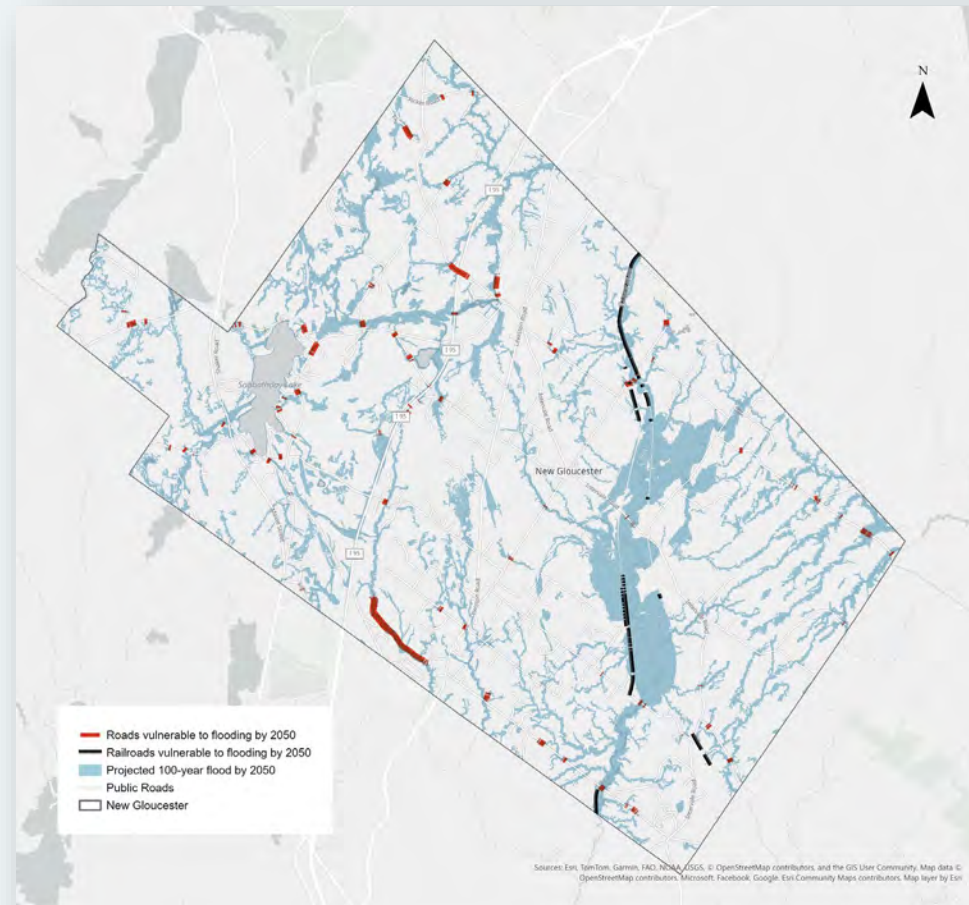
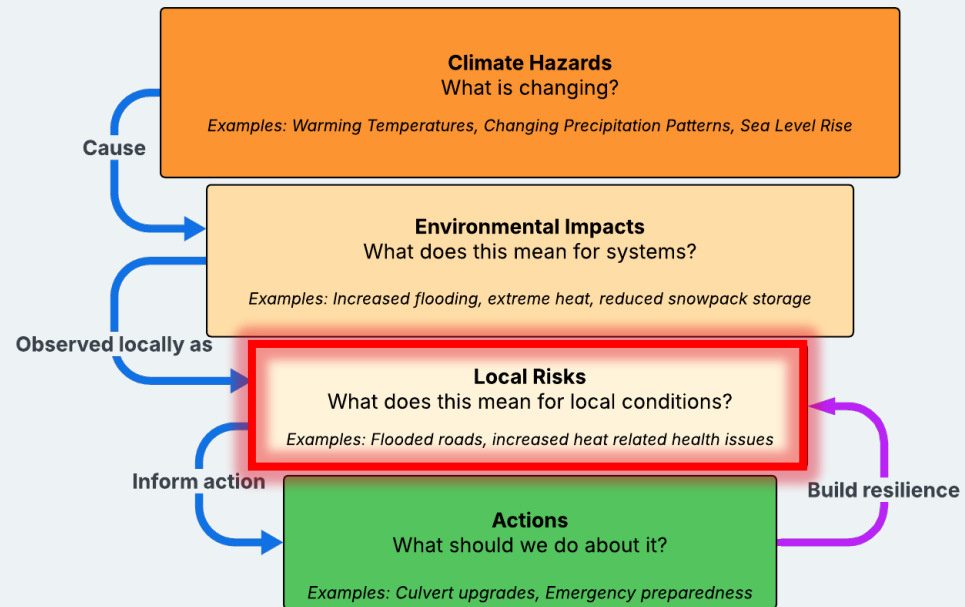


- Damage to homes, businesses, critical facilities, and infrastructure
- Loss of access
- Power outages
- Property damage
- Increased energy demand



- Changing tourism seasons
- Changes to tax base
- Increasing costs
- Supply chain Disruptions
- Natural resource job shifts

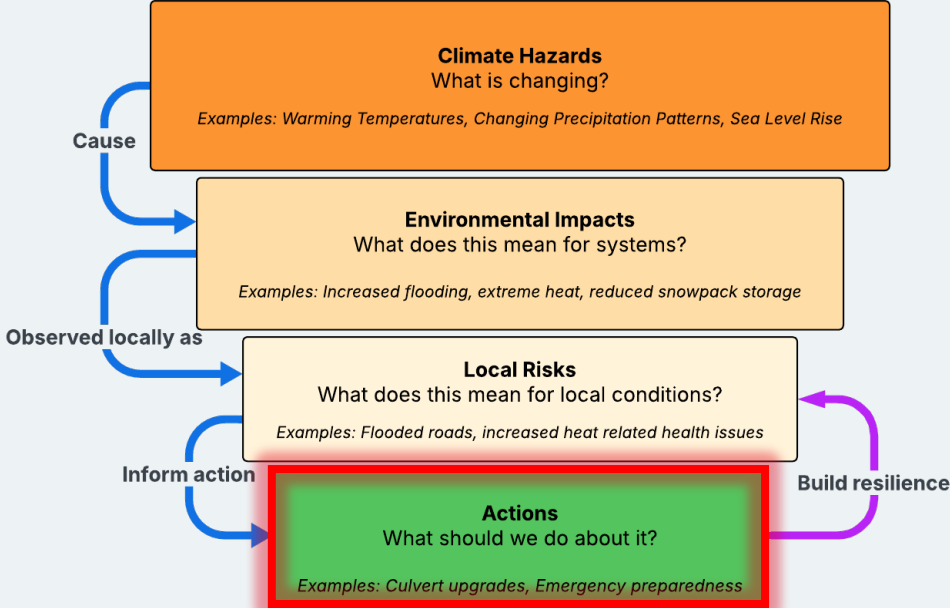
Local Risks



Example resources in at-risk flooding areas

- Over 7 miles of roads
- 57 buildings
- 19 bridges

Example Process



Resource

Roadways



Hazard

Warming Temperatures,
Changing Precipitation



Impacts

Shortens lifespan, increases
cost of repairs, inundated
with water, limits access



Local Risks

7 miles in at-risk
areas



Actions

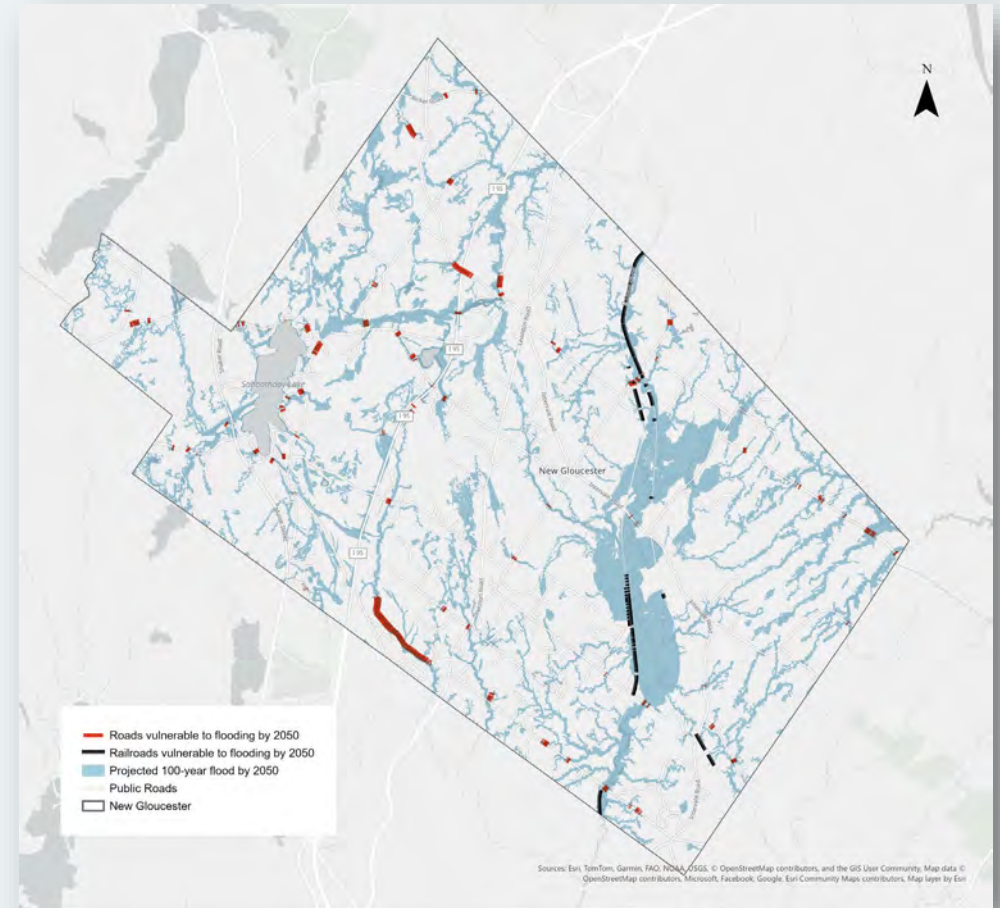
Prioritize high-vulnerability roadways for
modifications during infrastructure life cycle
replacements with expedited action on critical
routes vital for emergency access and
connectivity

Critical Infrastructure

At Risk

- Over 7 miles of roads
- 57 buildings
- Culverts at risk of overtopping

Transportation Priority



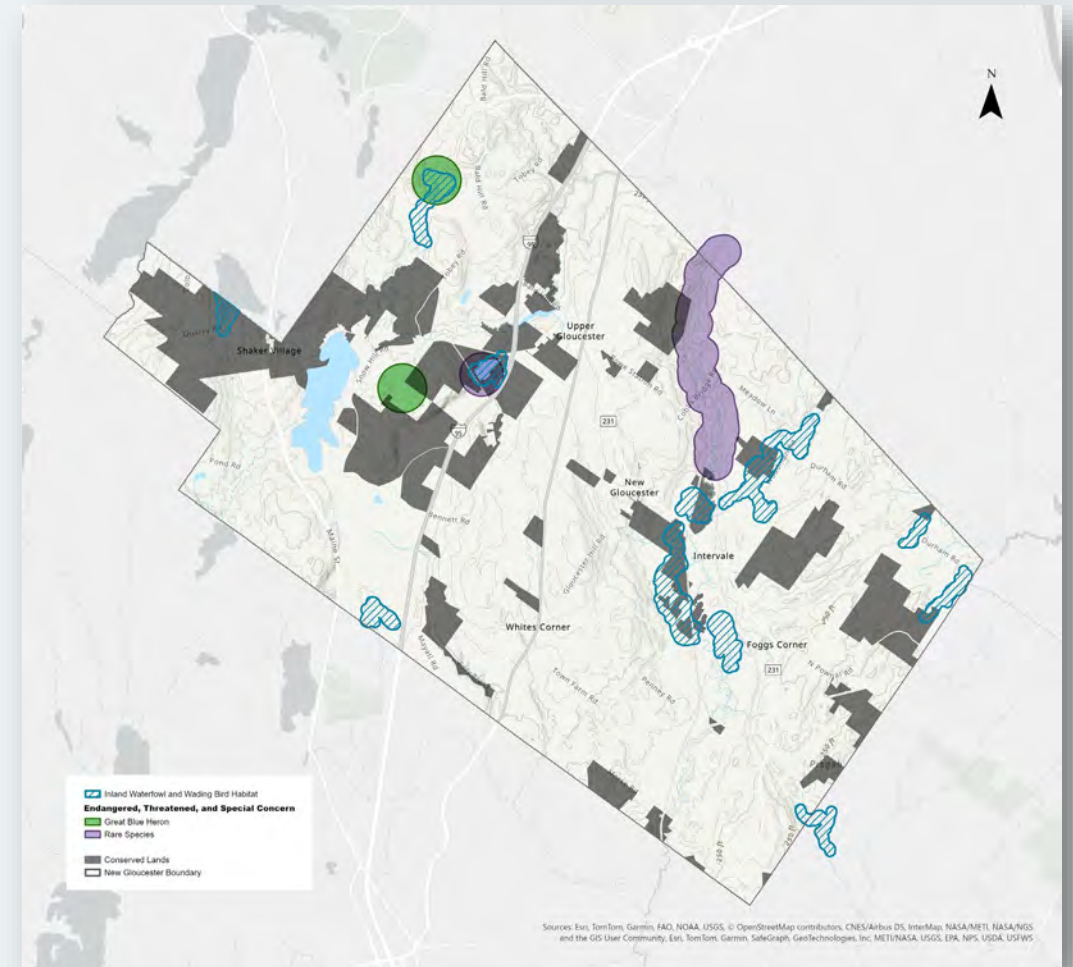
****Ensure transportation access for residents and emergency services during flooding events****

Natural Resources

At Risk

- Critical Species
- Flooding of conserved lands
- Decreased water quality

Water Resources Priority



****Protect water resources and continue to foster ecosystem conservation****

Community Resources

At Risk

- Public health
- Socially vulnerable populations
- Housing

Social Vulnerabilities Priority



15 %

Population 65+



31 %

Households with person living with a disability



16 %

Households who are cost-burdened

****Address challenges to public health and community resilience****

Upcoming Grant Funding

Strengthening Community Resilience through Emergency Management and Public Health

1. Update comprehensive Emergency Management Plan
2. Develop a community communications framework and database
3. Community Education and Outreach
4. Expand the Town's emergency response
5. Conduct a critical access infrastructure review

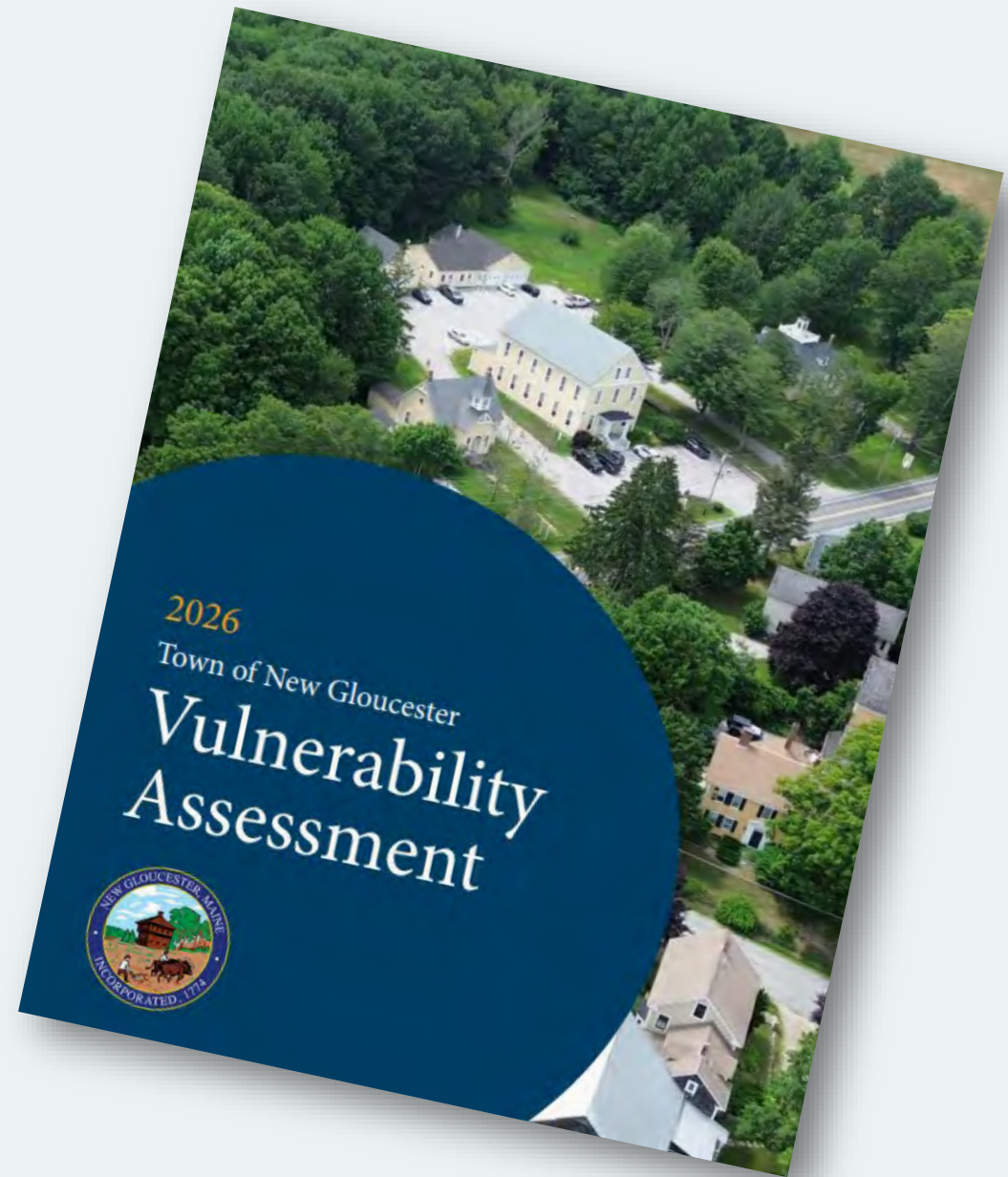


Read More



www.NewGloucesterSustainability.com/VulnerabilityAssessment

Access from the Environmental Resources Committee page on the New Gloucester website



Resilient Yards

How to get started



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Lawns in the US

- Single largest crop, takes up 40-50 million acres (40% residential)
- Most irrigated crop in the US (60 million acres feet per year)
- 1 hour of mowing (gas-powered) = 100 miles of driving



Ecological Gardening Best Practices



Photo courtesy of Kelly Corbin

- Embrace messiness
- Plant densely
- Always something in bloom
- Get to know your soil as well as sun/shade

Why Native Plants



- Climate friendly
- Preserves biodiversity
- Less maintenance

The Cardboard Method



Garden Design



Planting



South Portland Resilient Yards

- Sustainable landcare practices
- Provide 'starter kits' for transitioning lawns into native habitat gardens
- Ecological and social resilience
- Community members collaborate

Resilient Yards Program History

2023

100 Resilient Yards Launch

In the first year, with 8 partners, volunteers worked with 100 participants to install:

- rain gardens
- organic lawn
- vegetable gardens
- native habitat gardens

2024

Narrowed Focus

- Vegetable gardens and native habitat gardens
- Formed advisory committee of partners and volunteers to guide the program

2025

Coaching Model

- Focus on native habitat gardens
- Coaching capacity informs participants

**Over the
past 3 years**

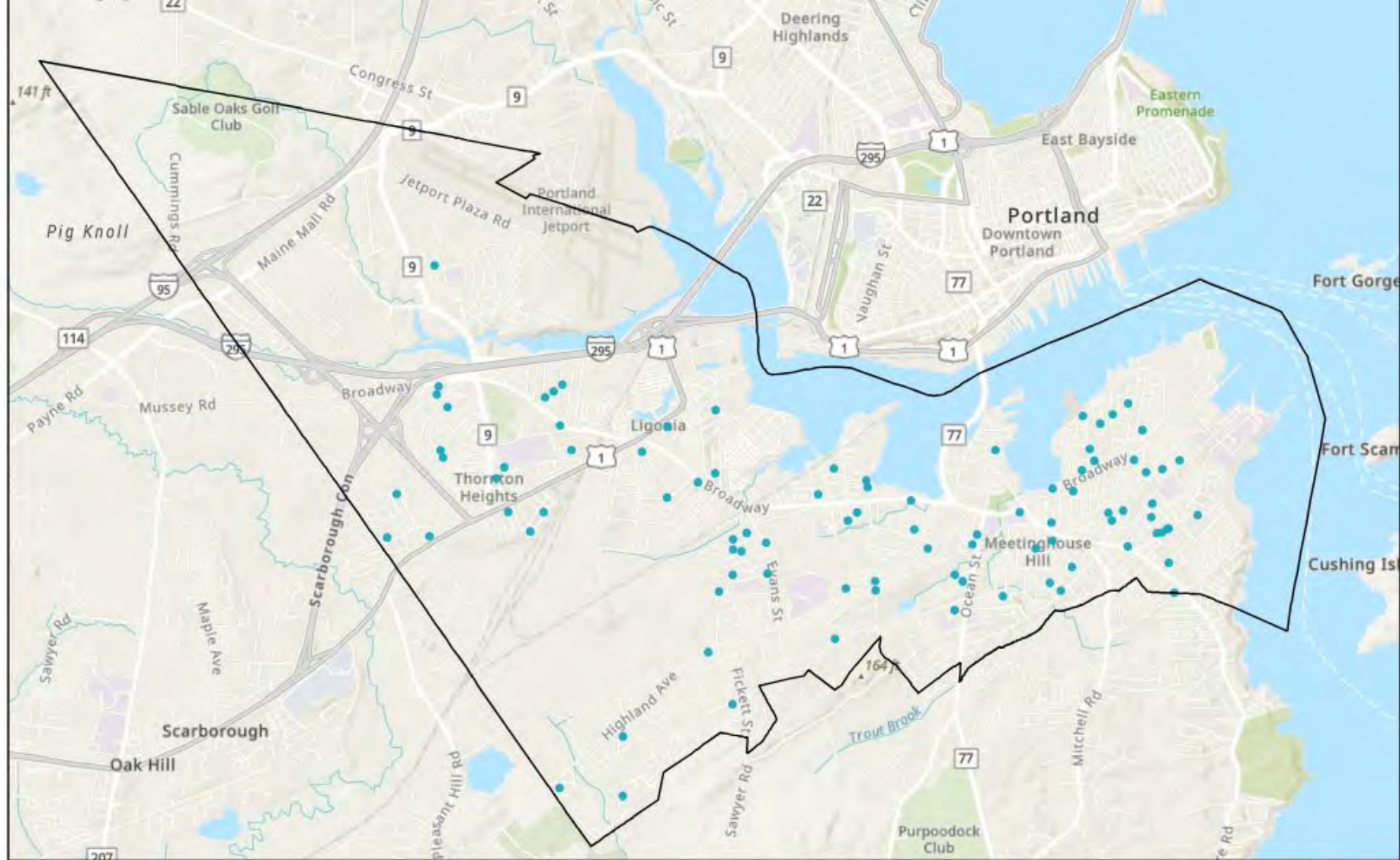
230 participants

65 volunteer coaches

1,352 native plants



2023

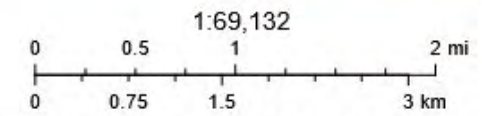


10/22/2025

City Boundary

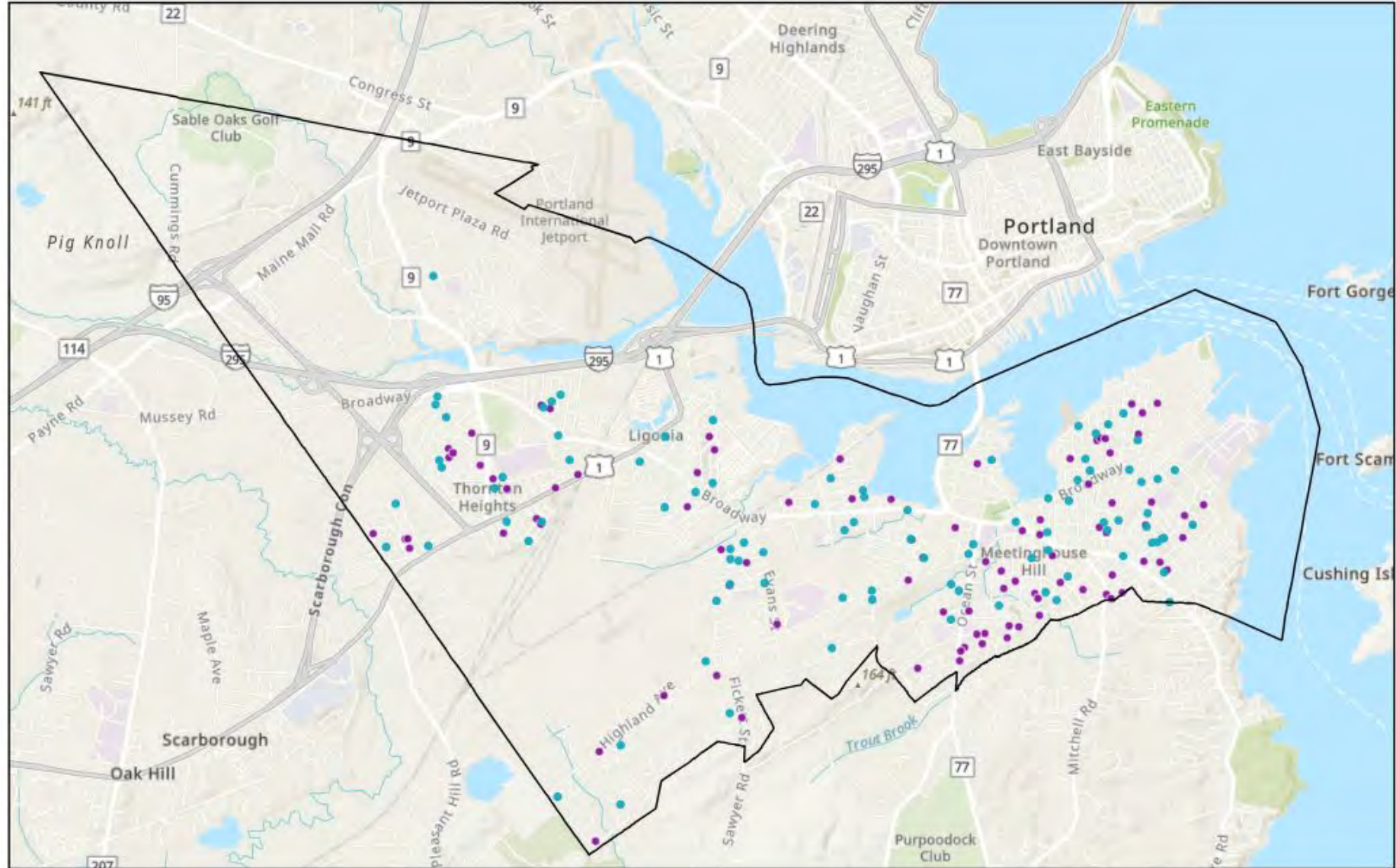
World_Hillshade

Resilient Yards 2023 Participants



Esri, NASA, NGA, USGS, FEMA, Sources: Esri, TomTom, Garmin, FAO, NOAA, USGS, (c) OpenStreetMap contributors, and the GIS User

2024



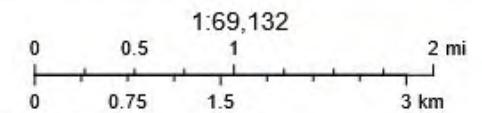
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City Boundary

Resilient Yards 2023 Participants

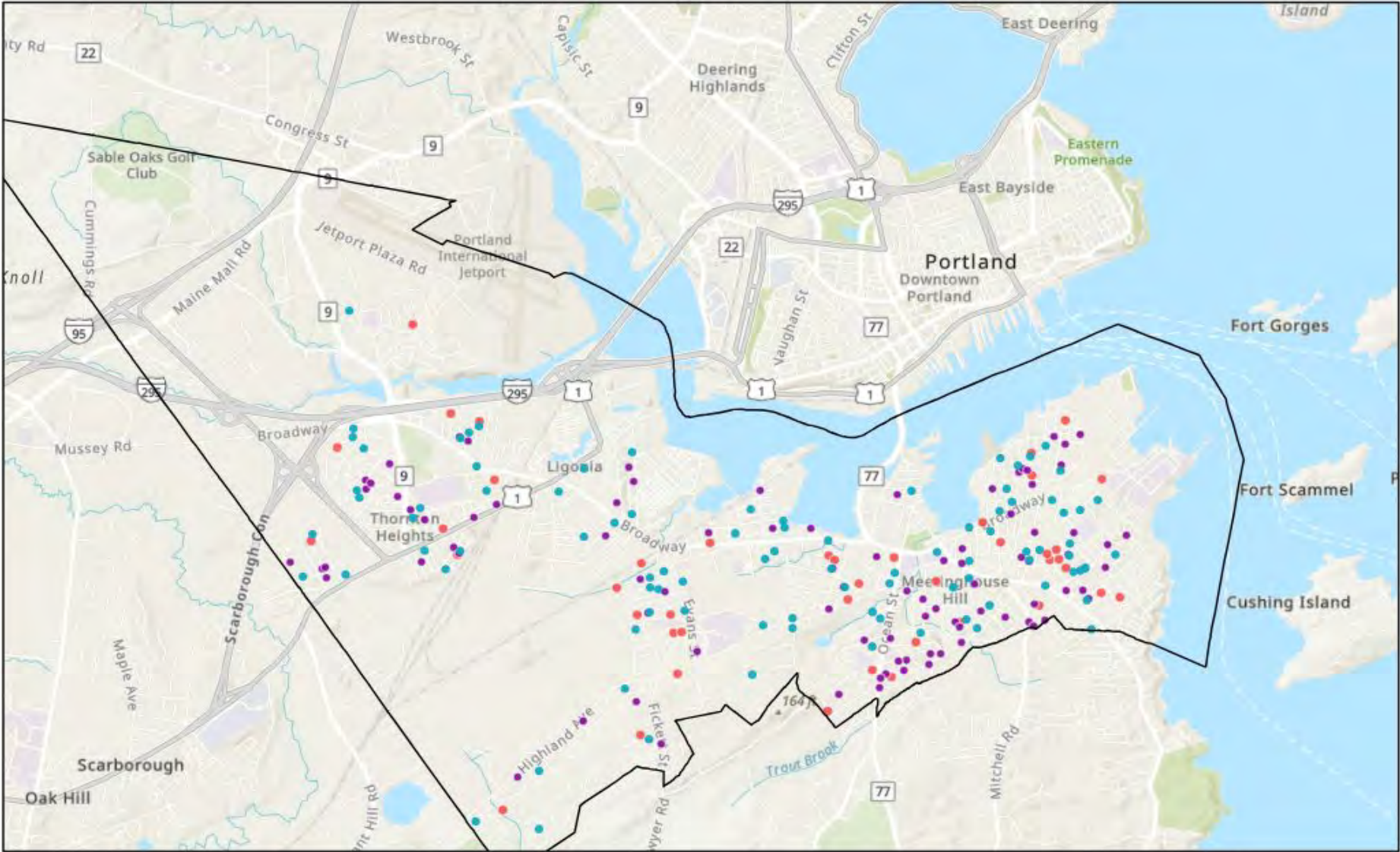
2024 Resilient Yards Participants

World_Hillshade



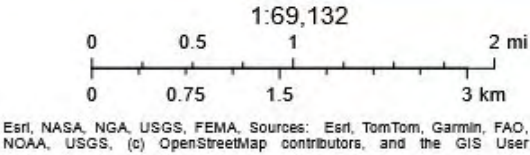
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2025



10/22/2025

- City Boundary
- Resilient Yards 2023 Participants
- 2024 Resilient Yards Participants
- 2025 Resilient Yards Participants
- World_Hillshade



Social Resilience



You can do this anywhere!



Resources for Getting Started

Gardening for Pollinators

Planning, Creating, and Maintaining
a Pollinator Garden: A Five-step Guide



Step 3: Apply a thick layer of mulch on top of the cardboard, ideally 3-6 inches deep. Water the mulch.



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Local Resources For Starting and Maintaining your Resilient Yard

Where can you get compost and mulch?

Here are some local retailers that offer organic compost and mulch through pick up or delivery:

- Garbage to Garden
- Jordan's Farm
- Broadway Gardens Greenhouses Inc.



Where can you get native plants and seeds?

Access to native plants and seeds are crucial for starting and maintaining your garden. Visit your local plant nursery to see what wild types they have available, or check out some local plant sales:

- Wild Seed Project's annual plant sale fundraiser
- UMaine Master Gardener Volunteer Plant Sale
- List of native plant nurseries in Maine
- Maine Audubon's Native Plant sale



Invasive plants and pests

An invasive plant is a plant that is not native to a particular ecosystem, whose introduction poses a threat to habitats and natural resources. Learn more about why they are a threat to our Maine landscape [here](#). You can find common invasive plants in Maine using the Invasive Plant Photo Gallery online tool. Use Maine's 'Got Pests?' online tool to identify and learn how to manage pests.

Get involved with Maine Native Plant Networks

Connect with fellow gardeners in our community to share experiences, answer questions, and troubleshoot garden challenges.

- Join Backyard Gardening Maine Facebook group
- Subscribe to Maine Home Garden News
- Explore the Wild Seed Project's blogs and check out their upcoming events



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2025 Resilient Yards: Native Plants Fact Sheet Sunny Species

Common Name	Characteristics	Bloom Season	Height/Width	Scientific Name	Image
Hairy Beardtongue	Lavender - trumpet-shaped - hummingbirds - forms clumps	Mid (June/July)	3'x2'	Penstemon hirsutus	
Wild Bergamot	Lavender - bee balm - aromatic - spreads heavily - may need stakes	Mid (June/July)	4'x4'	Monarda fistulosa	
New England Aster	Violet - late season - showy - larval host - spreads heavily	Late (August/October)	4'x3'	Symphytrichum novi-belgii	
Virginia Mountain Mint	White - midsummer - aromatic - dense flower	Mid (June/July)	3'x2'	Pycnanthemum virginiana	



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100 Resilient
Yards

Energy Efficiency: Saving Money & Staying Comfortable

Practical steps for renters
and homeowners

May 21, 2026



Greater Portland Energy Coaches Pilot

- Free, personalized support to help residents navigate home energy upgrades
- **Neighbors helping neighbors** reduce energy costs and empowering residents to make informed decisions and act on home energy efficiency
- Focus on education, planning, and confidence-building, not selling products
- Coaches completed **Rewiring America Electric Coach Certification** program aimed at training individuals to support electrification efforts in their community



Your Home as a System

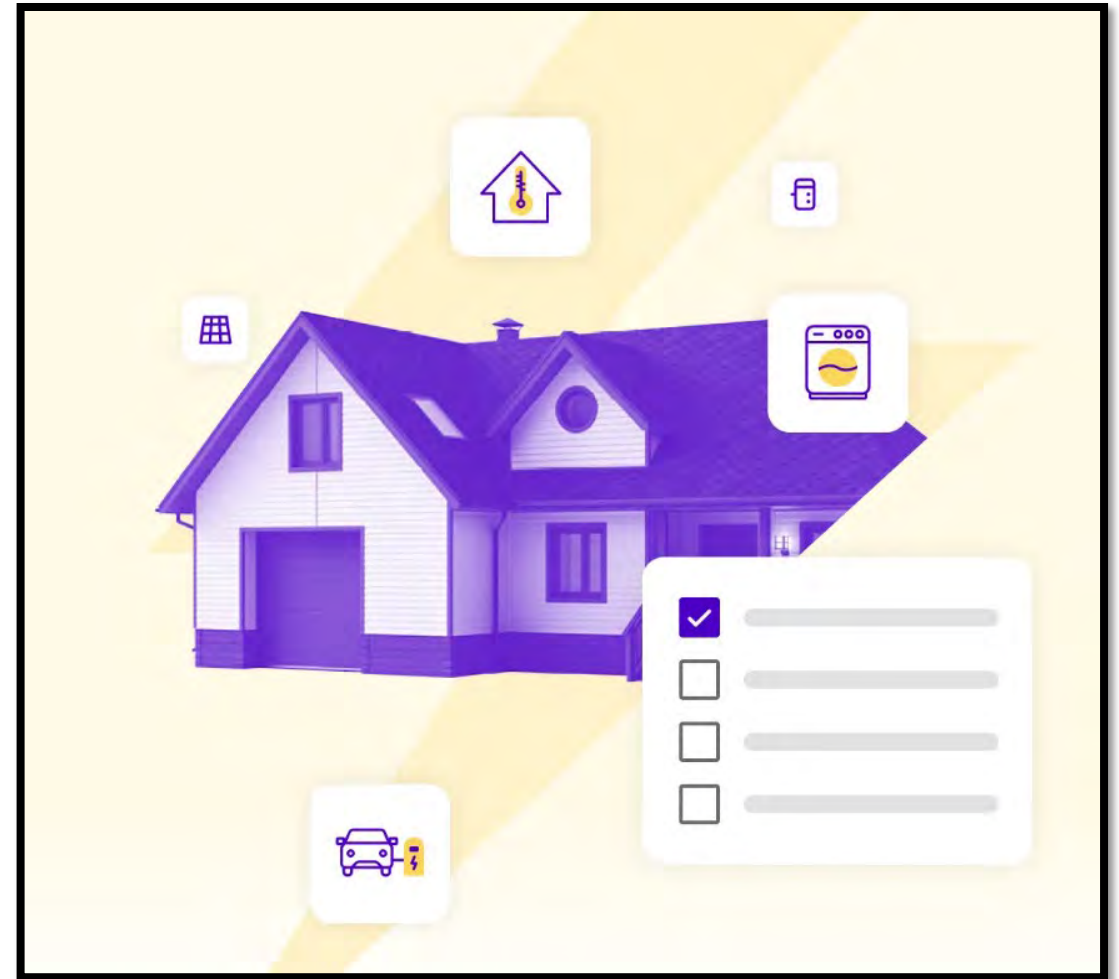
Rewiring America's Electrification Concept

Planning upgrades together helps avoid:

- Oversized electrical costs
- Panel limitations
- Inefficient equipment sizing
- Future rewiring

Example:

Better insulation → smaller heat pump
→ lower electrical demand.



Rewiring America

Does this sound familiar?



Your home feels cold even when the heat is on.



Your electricity bill keeps climbing.



You're not sure what upgrades actually make a difference.

Good news!

Small changes can lower costs and make your home more comfortable

Step 1: Seal the leaks (weatherize!)

Most heat loss comes from small gaps and air leaks.

Quick fixes:

- ✓ Weatherstrip doors
- ✓ Window insulation kits or inserts!
- ✓ Door draft stoppers
- ✓ Outlet insulation on exterior walls

Cost: often under \$20

Savings: up to 10 – 20% on heating



Step 2: Upgrade the easy stuff

- ✓ Switch remaining light bulbs to LED
- ✓ Prioritize ENERGY STAR appliances when looking at replacements
- ✓ Wash laundry with cold water
- ✓ Unplug unused electronics

LED bulbs use 75% less energy and last much longer!



Step 3: Upgrade your heating

Heat Pumps

- ✓ Efficient heating AND cooling
- ✓ Reduce oil or propane use
- ✓ Rebates available through Efficiency Maine

Heat Pump Water Heaters

- ✓ 3 – 4x more efficient than standard systems
- ✓ Can help reduce moisture in basements



Renting?

You still have options

- Window insulation kits or inserts!
- Draft blockers
- LED bulbs
- Ask landlords about Efficiency Maine weatherization programs



Why it matters in Maine

Heating is the biggest energy cost in
Maine homes

=

Biggest savings comes from keeping heat
inside your home.

About

58%

of home energy use
in Maine goes toward

HEATING



Tips for Cooling Smarter

Quick Fixes

- ✓ Use a Smart thermostat to automate temperature settings
- ✓ Seal and insulate around window AC units to prevent cool air leaks
- ✓ Clean AC filters and service units regularly
- ✓ Block sunlight with curtains or blinds during peak heat times

Long-term Upgrades

- ✓ Install a mini split heat pump for efficient zoned cooling
- ✓ Upgrade attic insulation to keep cool air inside longer



HOME ENERGY SAVERS



10%

Air Sealing

Save up to 10% on annual energy bills by sealing air leaking in and out of your home while improving comfort.*

15%

Insulation

Save an average of 15% on heating & cooling costs by adding air sealing and insulation.*

20%

HVAC System Tune-up

Regular maintenance can improve the efficiency of your HVAC system by 20% or more.*

8%

Smart Thermostat

Save an average of 8% on heating and cooling costs by switching to a smart thermostat.*

70%

Water Heater Upgrade

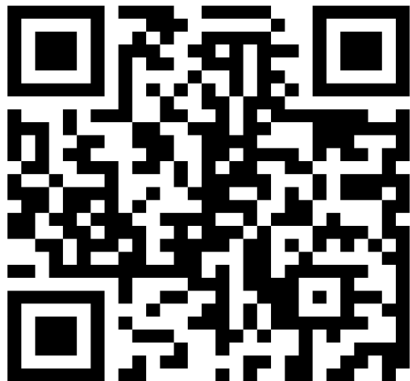
Upgraded ENERGY STAR certified heat pump water heaters use up to 70% less energy than standard electric models.*

*EnergyStar.gov - Program terms and conditions apply

Resources to get started:

Efficiency Maine

Rebates and incentives for energy-saving home upgrades



Maine Weatherization Assistance Program

Free or low-cost weatherization improvements for qualifying households



Home Energy Audits

Learn about professional assessments that can identify cost-effective home-energy improvements

