BACKGROUND

In September 2013, Great Lakes Adaptation Assessment for Cities (GLAA-C) granted $12,500 to the City of Ann Arbor to support the creation of a series of educational and promotional materials to raise awareness about climate change in Ann Arbor and start a community conversation around strategies for local climate adaptation and resilience that align with the City’s Climate Action Plan (CAP).

In December 2012, the City of Ann Arbor adopted a community-focused Climate Action Plan (CAP) that identifies community-level strategies to reduce greenhouse gas (ghg) emissions. In fall 2013, the City of Ann Arbor, along with local non-profit partners, including the Ecology Center and Huron River Watershed Council, launched the Community Climate Partnership (CCP) to support the CAP. The City used the GLAA-C grant as an opportunity to develop a set of short videos to demonstrate the significance of climate adaptation in the community and highlight work of the CCP and CAP.

PROJECT GOALS

1. Create a set of four video to demonstrate the significance of climate adaptation in the community and highlight work of the CCP and CAP
2. Establish a broader awareness around climate adaptation issues in the community through a stronger educational campaign

PROCESS

The City hired a consultant to develop the four-video series and worked with city staff and members of the CCP to serve as the review team for the videos. The topics and messaging of the four videos include:

Climate Adaptation - Ann Arbor is already experiencing climate impacts (a summary of the climate impacts) and an introduction to the CCP.

Extreme Storm Events - Ann Arbor has seen a 38% increase in the strongest (1%) storms in the past 30 years, compared to the previous 30 years.

Forests - Ann Arbor’s maple, beech, and birch forests will be slowly replaced by oak and hickory forests from the south over the coming century.

Heat - Ann Arbor is already experiencing warmer average temperatures and temperatures are expected to further increase.

VIDEO THEMES:

Each video in the series focus on the issue of climate change in Ann Arbor and highlighted three key themes:

1. What is changing in our local climate?
2. Why is this change important?
3. How can we adapt to this change?
Each video used data generated by Great Lakes Integrated Sciences and Assessment (GLISA) and GLAA-C to communicate historical and projected climate impacts within the videos.

**Key Considerations for Video Messaging:**

In developing the “look and feel” of the videos, the review team wanted the videos to have a hopeful tone that emphasized current ways the City and residents are taking local climate action.

- Create a “hopeful” tone that emphasizes the importance of community-level action
- Focus on the positive and not the negative (e.g., we can all make a change if we work together)
- Scale the problems for more effective storytelling and impact
- Focus on one predicted weather change, like changes in precipitation
- Tell the local story, with a focus on historical data (what has already happened)

**LESSONS LEARNED**

- **Find the trusted sources.** In some cases, the City may not be the trusted source of information. In the Ann Arbor video series, the videos are not heavily branded as “City” products, so that other entities would be more likely to use and share the videos. No city staff members were interviewed for the video; by focusing interviews on experts and local community leaders, the videos evoke a sense of community building and awareness.
- **Highlight multiple viewpoints.** Interviews in the videos try to capture stories that relate to multiple audiences. For instance, don’t just tell the science story behind climate impacts, also tell the resident story.
- **Focus on community members.** Highlighting community members that are already engaged in climate issues helps with community building and identifies local champions.
- **Go beyond the scientific and “city” story.** Try to make the content relatable and tell the story in different ways to target different audiences.

**NEXT STEPS**

This project created a set of tools to establish a broader awareness around climate adaptation issues in the community through a stronger educational campaign. These videos were meant to test if less municipal focused branding and innovation in the videos would attract more viewership. As next steps, the City will:

- Disseminate videos and promote community awareness of local climate impacts
- Evaluate the effectiveness of channels of outreach
- Develop more multi-media tools to communicate the City’s climate messaging
- Share the videos with other sustainability offices to solicit feedback and share products

All videos are posted online at: [www.a2energy.org/climate](http://www.a2energy.org/climate).