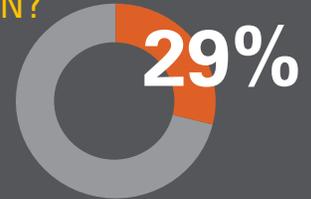




Climate Change Adaptation: A Factsheet for Local Leaders

“HAS YOUR JURISDICTION CREATED AND/OR IMPLEMENTED A CLIMATE ADAPTATION PLAN?”



Jurisdictions that have created, implemented or are discussing a climate adaptation plan

Understanding the role that climate change adaptation currently plays in local governments provides useful information to decision-makers and may shed light on where to focus services and support. This factsheet presents data collected during a 2013-2014 survey of city administrators, managers, commissioners, directors of departments, and other key decision-makers throughout the Great Lakes Region. The survey aimed to better understand how, if at all, climate influences the decisions they are making and if so, what they are doing to address climate impacts.

The information discussed in this factsheet was generated through an email survey with follow-up phone calls. A total of 96 responses were received for an overall response rate of approximately 20%. While we are able to make qualitative observations with this information about how local leaders' perceptions and actions are related to climate change in their jurisdictions, the results are not considered statistically significant.

OF THE 20 JURISDICTIONS CREATING, IMPLEMENTING, OR DISCUSSING A CLIMATE ADAPTION PLAN, THE FOLLOWING HAVE BEEN PERFORMED AS PART OF THE PLAN PREPARATION PROCESS:

- 9 Are assessing climate change impacts in jurisdiction
- 5 Are mapping climate change impacts
- 4 Are conducting public outreach
- 3 Are mapping climate change vulnerabilities

KEY FINDINGS

- 20 of 70 (29%) jurisdictions responded that they have created, implemented, or are discussing a climate adaptation plan.
- Financial resources, public support, and knowledge about solutions are the top resources leaders say they need to manage climate risks.
- Updating landscape and stormwater management practices are the most common actions taken to address climate change concerns.
- City staff and city council members are cited as being the most actively involved actors in identifying municipal adaptation strategies.

“WHAT RESOURCES DO YOU THINK YOUR JURISDICTION WILL NEED IN THE FUTURE TO MANAGE WEATHER AND CLIMATE RISKS?”

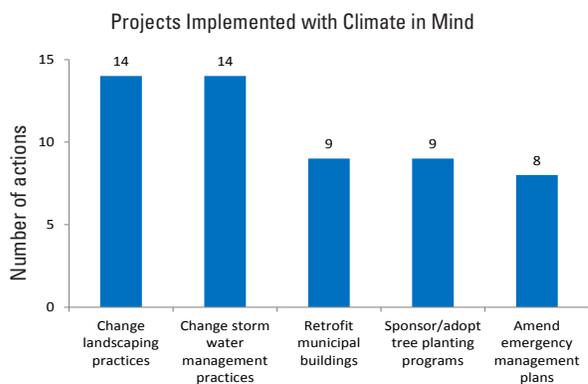


ADVANCING WITHOUT ADAPTATION PLANS

Of the 47 communities not engaged in developing adaptation plans, 24 did identify actors within their jurisdictions who are actively engaged in targeted adaptation strategies. Respondents indicated that city staff, state governments, city council, and mayors were the primary actors pursuing adaptation strategies. Furthermore, 21 of these governments responded that they are collaborating with other units of government or organizations in climate action or adaptation efforts.

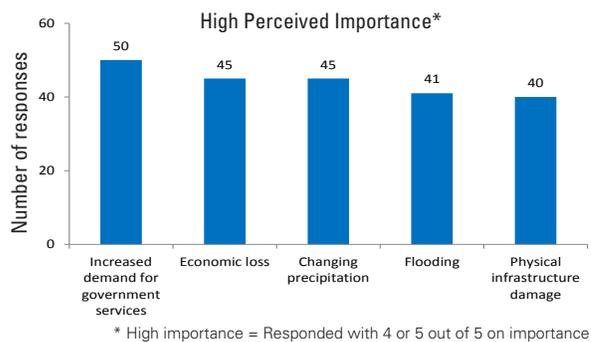
CLIMATE CHANGE MOTIVATING ACTION

“Over the last five years, has your jurisdiction taken any of the following actions? [If yes], was climate change a primary motivator?”



PERCEPTIONS ON IMPORTANCE OF CLIMATE IMPACTS

“How important do you think the following weather or climate-related impacts will be in your jurisdiction over the next five years?”



For more information visit: graham.umich.edu/glaac
Contact climatecenter@umich.edu with questions about the survey
Cover photo courtesy of Richard Deming

COLLABORATION

21 RESPONDENTS SAID THAT THEIR COMMUNITY IS ENGAGED IN CLIMATE ACTION PLANNING OR ADAPTATION EFFORTS WITH OTHER ORGANIZATIONS OR LEVELS OF GOVERNMENT. COLLABORATORS INCLUDED:

- | | |
|--|---------------------------|
| 7 Regional Government | 4 State Government |
| 6 Local Government | 4 Federal Agency |
| 6 Non-Governmental Organization | 3 University |



Leaders in Kingston, Ontario launch a Tree Planting Campaign
Photo Credit: Daniel Shipp

CONCLUSIONS

Survey results indicate that local leaders are most concerned with climate impacts that may increase the need for government services, cause economic loss, or alter precipitation patterns. Although relatively few communities have completed or implemented adaptation plans, several are involved in adaptation activities such as changing landscaping or stormwater management practices.

As communities prepare to face climate change, respondents indicate that they will need financial resources, public support, and knowledge of potential solutions to manage weather and climate risks. The concerns, interests, and needs highlighted in these survey findings can be used to help inform the work of decision-makers and service providers in municipalities.



The Great Lakes Adaptation Assessment for Cities increased understanding about the challenges and opportunities municipalities face when adapting to climate change. This effort was supported by the Kresge Foundation and the University of Michigan's Graham Sustainability Institute, which fosters sustainability through knowledge, learning, and leadership. For more information on the project, see: www.graham.umich.edu/climate.