

Steering Committee #4



Project Name	Coastal Lakeshore Economy and Resiliency Initiative
Date:	July 28, 2021
Meeting:	Jefferson – St. Lawrence Region – Steering Committee #4
Attachments	Presentation

1. Welcome

Participants were named with their affiliations on Zoom.

2. CLEAR Deliverables Summary

The consultant team reviewed the overall sequence of tasks to advance the CLEAR initiative. To date, the team has collaborated with the Steering Committee (SC) to identify issues and vulnerable areas within waterfront communities. The first public workshop was held. Community profiles and asset inventory are advancing.

3. Public Workshop Highlights

The public workshop was held on June 29, 2021. The meeting began with an introduction to the CLEAR initiative, its goals, deliverables, timeline, and responsibilities. An interactive group activity allowed participants to elaborate on their community's risk, vulnerability, and exposure. Major discussion topics included the need for education on factors affecting water levels, the need to enlist local, trusted voices as sources of information, and the fact that the Lake Ontario/St. Lawrence River shoreline is a unique ecosystem that requires careful stewardship.

Comment: I would like to reinforce the need for education on factors affecting water levels. There is very little understanding on how IJC can control water levels, they can control levels in inches, not in feet like so many people appear to think.

Comment: I was in a small study group of 6 or 7 people during the public meeting. The discussion we had changed the minds of 3 highly influential individuals in our community. I'm optimistic that some people are beginning to grasp the concepts and complexity of the issues facing our shoreline communities.

4. Community Profiles

Project team provided an overview of data and information incorporated into the community profile document. This document includes a regional characterization as well as specific analyses of each municipality with land area within the DOS mapped risk area of Jefferson and St. Lawrence counties. A link to the document will be emailed to SC members and associates the week of August 9th. While we hope that the SC members will find time to review the entire document, we request that everyone review (at least) the regional characterization section and profiles of communities that are of greatest interest.

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The regional characterization section of the profile document addresses current conditions and trends in:

- Watershed and Coastal Environment
- Flooding
- Climate Impacts
- Social Vulnerability
- Tourism and Recreation
- Regional Stressors

Community profiles provide a foundation to guide resiliency planning in the Jefferson-St. Lawrence shoreline region. The data will help evaluate current conditions and recent trends. The reports provide an overview of vulnerable infrastructure and coastal hazards and risks, both current and future.

5. Asset Inventory

Provided a brief overview of the asset inventory which provides a “living inventory” of assets that reflects prior planning initiatives and local input. General asset classifications include economic, health and social services, housing, infrastructure systems, and natural and cultural resources.

Through the CLEAR initiative, the asset inventory will advance to include REDI projects/asset inventory, natural protective features, residential clusters, critical facilities, locally designated significant facilities, funded projects, and proposed projects.

Comment: Why is Lake Ontario itself shown as extreme risk? Response: The risk area is highly dependent on elevation and therefore shown in red.

6. Vision of a Resilient Future

The SC was reminded of the definition of resiliency and resiliency themes refined through conversations with the Steering Committee and the public. The SC was asked to vote on their acceptance of the vision statement, below.

“The region has implemented effective strategies to maintain the vibrancy of our shoreline communities while protecting the ecosystem services and functions that sustain us all. The strategies reflect a shared commitment among individuals, communities, and regional/state partners to prepare for and respond to fluctuating water levels in Lake Ontario.”

Several members offered “thumbs up” on the vision statement during this discussion. SC members were encouraged to provide any additional feedback over the next week to the consultant team via email (send to Liz Moran lmoran@ecologicllc.com).

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7. Homework and Next Steps

Community profiles will be released for review the week of August 9th. SC members will be emailed a link to an Adobe PDF document where you can leave comments. Comments are requested by August 18th to enable the consultant team to make any editorial changes in advance of the next monthly meeting.

The next SC meeting will be August 25th and will include feedback on the community profiles, progress with stakeholder focus groups, planning for various lake level scenarios, and preparing for the second public workshop.

The 2nd public workshop will be held evening of September 21st. We need help from the SC with publicizing the event and encouraging community members to attend. Workshop #2 will present the final vision statement, review assets and risks, and introduce scenario planning in the context of potential strategies to mitigate impacts of extreme water levels. The project team hopes to include a speaker on reasons for changing water levels in the lake and river.

Copies To: Jefferson-St. Lawrence CLEAR Steering Committee members and associates and project team

Meeting notes prepared by Michelle McGinnis of EcoLogic. If there are any discrepancies, please notify our office within three business days of receipt