

The RAFT: Maintaining Progress in Coastal Virginia

Grant # NA23NOS4190255 Task 91.02

Virginia Department of Environmental Quality, Coastal Zone Management Program

The RAFT | Crater 2022-2024 | **Hopewell Final RAFT Implementation Summary**

Checklist Item	Summary, Status, and Next Steps
<p>(1) Address Social Determinants of Health</p> <p>Address social determinants of health, such as food and housing insecurity, including studies on affordable housing and transit to inform outreach improvement efforts that connect underserved populations with support services.</p>	<p>Summary: Addressing social determinates of health via studies on affordable housing, transportation accessibility, and food security. Healthy Families Initiative developed and aimed to increase resident accessibility to social services and basic needs. Funding sources identified and shared by The RAFT Team with local foodbank. GIS expert from ODU Dr. Kun Xie, completed research on sidewalk accessibility via satellite imagery. Results were compiled and presented to city staff along with recommendations for potential improvements and further (in-person) data collection. Public health SME Dr. Leslie Hoglund was engaged to assess food and housing security and collaborate with city planner to develop long-term plan.</p> <p>Status: Transportation accessibility data completed and submitted to city officials. Due to changes in staffing and capacity, the food access and security action item was delayed. Ultimately even with survey incentives provided, Dr. Hoglund’s team could only complete 8 interviews by October 2024.</p> <p>Next Steps:</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hoglund team continues to attempt to update contact information and recruit Hopewell families to participate. Dr. Hoglund is looking for additional funding opportunities to complete doorway surveys.
<p>(2) Increase Educational Opportunities on Broad Resilience Strategies</p> <p>Increase educational opportunities on broad resiliency strategies including trainings for community members and service provider, educational and recreational opportunities for students to be in tune with environmental sustainability, and design demonstration projects on school grounds and public spaces.</p>	<p>Summary:</p> <p>Public library agreed to display information about invasive species. Wetlands Watch presented the Chesapeake Bay Landscape Professionals Program opportunity and opportunities to improve the City's Community Rating System score to the Implementation Team. Flood reduction funding resources such as the Community Flood Preparedness Fund (CFPF) were identified by ODU and shared with Implementation Team members, who expressed interest in further exploring eligibility requirements.</p> <p>Status:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> City planning staff are moving forward with pursuing the CFPF program by way of resilience language updates to the City's comprehensive plan. ODU identified a synergy between RAC Item #2 and RAC Item #4, providing an opportunity for Hopewell to leverage its resources, achieve multiple goals, and progress resilience efforts. By updating resilience language and planning goals to meet the eligibility requirements of CFPF (which includes resilience education), Hopewell can

	<p>secure funding to meet those goals and expand on resilience efforts, including educational offerings.</p> <p>Next Steps:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City staff will continue to pursue CFPF funding following amendments to the Comprehensive Plan and Hazard Mitigation Plan. • ODU provided resilience education resources to staff and recommendations for how to extend that to Hopewell residents and schools.
<p>(3) Redevelop the Marina</p> <p>Redevelop the marina to be more accessible by all and a waterfront destination for the community.</p>	<p>Summary:</p> <p>Environmental engineering SME Dr. Bryce Corlett was brought to an Implementation Team meeting and introduced to appropriate City staff to assess the waterfront/marina and offer insight for future efforts.</p> <p>Status:</p> <p>Delayed. Introductions were made, but due to changes in City Council priorities, this item remains at the preliminary stage.</p> <p>Next Steps:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RAFT Team SME to continue engagement with City officials to track support overtime and provide additional support when the prioritization increases.
<p>(4) Update the Comprehensive Plan</p>	<p>Summary:</p>

Ensure the Comprehensive Plan includes community input on coastal resilience strategies (to storm surge, sea level rise, and riverine flooding) and capacity to access relevant funding streams.

Updates to Comprehensive Plan aimed to include community/environmental resilience language and added as a new chapter of the existing comprehensive plan. This will expand eligibility to funding/grant source options, such as the Community Flood Preparedness Fund (CFPF).

ODU staff hosted and facilitated the Vulnerability, Consequences, and Adaptation Planning Scenarios (VCAPS) for City staff in August 2024. The VCAPS workshop, consisting of city staff and partner stakeholders, was utilized to identify resilience measures and priorities to be included in said update. During this interactive educational workshop ODU shared climate data specific to Hopewell, explored the perceived risk level of City staff, and discussed limits of the City's hazard response capacity. Workshop results were included in a brief report.

3 other deliverable products were developed by ODU staff:

- A database of all existing resilience language found in the City's current Comprehensive Plan. This document was provided to City staff for reference in plan updates and to encourage buy in of City Council regarding policy updates.
- A revised RAFT scorecard for the City of Hopewell, which includes extreme heat and riverine flooding, as an additional resource for City staff to identify opportunities for increased resilience.

- A Heat Toolkit containing recommendations for addressing extreme heat events, informed by researching extreme heat strategies in other cities of comparable size.

Status:

- Workshop findings and recommendations were compiled into a brief which was presented to Hopewell's City Council for review. Recommendations included that of language updates, policy changes, and community programming.
- The revised RAFT Scorecard, a document containing existing resilience language, and the Heat Toolkit were all included with the brief report and submitted to the City Council for review.

Next Steps:

- **RAFT Team** will continue checking in with the City Planner for updates on official decisions/actions by Council.
- City planning staff will continue to work with City Council and the Crater Planning District Commission to implement policy and resilience action recommendations.

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