

WESTMORELAND COUNTY

Resilience Action Checklist

The RAFT | Resilience Adaptation Feasibility Tool



TOP PRIORITIES TO ADDRESS IN THE NEXT YEAR WITH SUPPORT FROM THE RAFT

- ❑ **FORM A WESTMORELAND COUNTY RESILIENCE COMMITTEE**

Create a long-term resilience committee comprised of appropriate members, to create a resilience communication strategy for the county to reach other local, state, and federal officials as well as residents and second homeowners.
- ❑ **DEVELOP A RESILIENCE COMMUNICATION STRATEGY**

Develop a resilience communication strategy that builds on existing communication channels of the Department of Social Services (DSS), Department of Emergency Services, public safety officials, Bay Aging, and faith-based organizations, and that establishes regular conversation between community partners to facilitate outreach coordination. Integrate provisions for intentional outreach to vulnerable populations and identify and address language barriers where appropriate. Create simple messages for action centered on resilience topics including flood zones vs. evacuation zones, vulnerability, causes of flooding, the National Flood Insurance Program, and emergency evacuation.
- ❑ **EDUCATE FAMILIES ON HOMELESSNESS AND PROVIDE RESOURCES**

Assist schools in educating families on the different definitions of homelessness (i.e. hotel stays, doubled up, etc.) in partnership with DSS and Bay Aging, and provide resources for families experiencing homelessness.
- ❑ **ASSESS PUBLIC AND PRIVATE INFRASTRUCTURE**

Conduct an assessment of public and private infrastructure to identify issues, needs, and projects aimed at increasing the county's resilience, including private wells and septic systems.
- ❑ **ASSESS AND INCREASE TREE CANOPY**

Conduct a tree canopy assessment to identify opportunities for native tree plantings throughout the county, including in urban areas. Conduct tree plantings to increase the tree canopy and establish a plan for maintaining new and existing trees.
- ❑ **INTEGRATE RESILIENCE INTO THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN**

Review the Comprehensive Plan to integrate resilience throughout, drawing on the RAFT core team's experience in local government policies relating to resilience from across the state.

This checklist was developed by community participants in the online Resilience Action Workshop, conducted and facilitated by The RAFT three-university Collaborative Team on June 12th, 2020. This document is intended to be static and record the outcomes of that workshop. However, the checklist items and their details may evolve over the course of the year-long implementation of The RAFT in response to the changing circumstances and needs of the community.

OTHER ATTENDEE-SUGGESTED ACTIONS FOR FUTURE RESILIENCE EFFORTS

Outside of the scope of the RAFT's implementation support

PRIORITIZED ACTIONS

- Develop zoning and land use codes or policies to address increased sunny-day flooding potential and land development in flood-zone waterfront areas. Update county code to reflect revised flood maps forthcoming in 2021. Adopt measures that go beyond FEMA/VDEM requirements.

OTHER IDEAS IDENTIFIED

- Distribute preparedness materials for resilience and emergency response through public school students.
- Identify actions that would increase CRS rating, building off of the Wetlands Watch effort, and continue local/regional conversations around the feasibility of CRS participation.
- Identify riparian buffer areas with less than 35 feet of forested buffer - plant to increase buffer width using native species adapted to the site.
- Identify areas for land conservation that will help increase resilience of the county. Use VDOF Forest Conservation Value map to identify large block of forestland to conserve.
- Develop a funding strategy to help ensure continuity of volunteer-run programs providing meals and other services to low-income residents (such as Helping Neighbors).
- Communicate and use Bay Aging as a model and resource for providing services to vulnerable populations.
- Expand broadband access to assist with connection issues - resilience, economic development, communication, etc.

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For more information visit The RAFT website: raft.ienvirginia.edu

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