

Town of Mendon Climate Smart Communities Task Force Town Board Quarterly Update - May 2026

Our year-end objective is straightforward: to present the Town Board with a definitive roadmap to achieve the 120 points required for Bronze Certification within the NYS Climate Smart Communities (CSC) program. Earning Bronze status isn't just a badge of honor; it has practical, financial benefits. It directly improves the town's scores on competitive state grants, which means New York State will help pick up the tab for our future infrastructure needs.

Our goal is to get there on time, on budget, and on the cutting edge. To accomplish this, we have designed a simple, three-step strategy to execute by the end of the year. First, we will catalog what Mendon has already done over the last few years. Second, we will map out the combination(s) of future actions needed to hit 120 points. Third, and most importantly, we will vet this pathway to ensure it makes operational and financial sense for our town before taking another step.

Step 1 - Capitalizing on What Mendon Has Done

Let's talk about step one: harvesting the low-hanging fruit. Mendon has already made great strides in climate and environmental stewardship. Whether it is previous HVAC and lighting efficiency upgrades, municipal recycling efforts, or protecting open spaces and environmentally sensitive areas, many of these initiatives qualify for CSC points today. Our task force will audit these past successes and get them documented within the CSC Dashboard, earning the Town points at zero additional cost to our taxpayers.

Step 2 - Designing the 120-Point Combination

Step two is about being strategic. Once we determine how many actions and points the Town has already completed and earned, we will review the program's remaining offering of actions to pick the most cost-effective and practical path forward. We will target the specific low-cost/no-cost actions that are consistent with Mendon's rural character and community priorities. We will design a customized points combination that delivers maximum benefit for the least amount of cost.

Step 3 - Operational & Financial Reality Check

Step three is our ultimate filter: reality. We will not propose any action that overburdens our Town's resources. Every potential action will undergo a rigorous review to assess its true cost and return on investment. If an action doesn't save the town money, protect our local assets, improve the health and well-being of our community, or come with grant funding, it likely doesn't fit in Mendon's plan.

Year-End Deliverable

What will you actually receive from us at year-end? The Town of Mendon CSC Bronze Certification Pathway Report will serve as a complete, transparent blueprint for our town's future. For every single action we recommend, the report will spell out exactly how long it will take, the estimated cost (if any), and the responsible parties who need to be involved. Crucially, it will explicitly identify the state grants available to cover the actions with associated costs. This ensures the Town Board has all the data required to make an informed, low-risk decision on exactly how and when to move forward.