



CAPE COD  
COMMISSION

# Communications Toolkit

## Regulatory Tools for Development in the Floodplain

TOWN OF CHATHAM

JUNE 2024

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Prepared by Cape Cod Commission Staff.

# Communications Toolkit: Regulatory Tools for Development in the Floodplain

TOWN OF CHATHAM

"Regulatory Tools for Development in the Floodplain" was funded by a Planning Assistant Grant from the Massachusetts Executive Office of Environmental Affairs and created in partnership with the Cape Cod Cooperative Extension/WHOI Sea Grant, Urban Harbors Institute at the University of Massachusetts Boston, and Noble Wickersham, and Heart, along with five partner communities: the Towns of Chatham, Eastham, Provincetown, Truro, and Wellfleet.

The project team developed wetlands regulations complementary to a previously created Coastal Resilience bylaw and a zoning bylaw with higher standards than those required under the FEMA National Flood Insurance Program. This work also serves to align local regulations and permitting reviews among various boards and commissions with differing purviews.

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CAPE COD COMMISSION

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## Introduction

Coastal resources serve vital functions, including supporting biodiversity, providing recreational opportunities, and acting as natural barriers against flood damage. Shoreline features like beaches, marshes, and dunes are dynamic systems that interact with nearby infrastructure. Man-made structures such as homes and seawalls can deflect wave action, interrupt natural sediment transport, exacerbate coastal erosion, and redirect flooding, impacting both natural and built environments. These structures can be undermined during heavy storms, leading to significant damage. Given the importance of our natural resources, the Town of Chatham has taken measures to avoid or minimize damage caused by development.

Coastal resilience is a community's ability to "bounce back" after hazardous events such as hurricanes, coastal storms, and flooding<sup>1</sup>. Current regulations primarily focus on flood-prone areas delineated on FEMA Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRM), known as Special Flood Hazard Areas (SFHA). However, these maps are based on past flood conditions and do not account for expected changes due to sea level rise and intensifying storm events. To prepare for future flooding, municipalities must expand floodplain regulations beyond FEMA-designated areas to include Coastal Resilience Zones that incorporate the latest data to anticipate future flood risks.

The existing State Building Code (9th edition) applies only to SFHAs identified by FEMA and may not adequately protect against the impacts of rising sea levels and more frequent and severe storms. Structures built today are expected to last well beyond the conditions identified in the FIRM and the State Building Code, making them increasingly vulnerable to climate change.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://oceanservice.noaa.gov/facts/resilience.html>

## How to use this document

This communications toolkit, tailored to the Town of Chatham, is a companion report to the wetlands regulations and zoning bylaw models for coastal floodplain development developed by the Cape Cod Commission. It will help the Town communicate the need to adopt the model wetlands regulations and zoning bylaw.

Similar toolkits have been developed to promote consistency of messaging around the Cape. Conversations about climate change and coastal development can be challenging; this toolkit is meant to provide language and steps to structure communications in a way that can be productive and increase shared understanding of each perspective.

Town staff and board members should use this document during the public process to adopt these model regulations and zoning changes, educate voters, residents, and homeowners on key components of the regulations, and build collaborative opportunities around coastal resiliency communications.

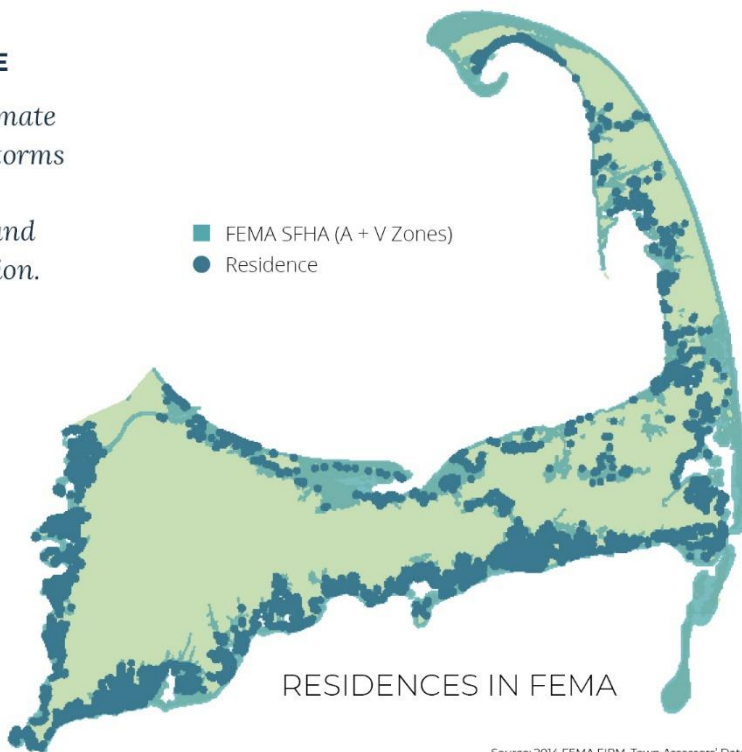
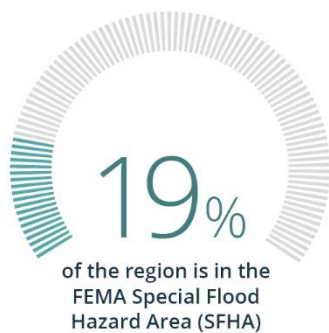
This framework includes strategies for setting goals and objectives, determining audiences, collaborators, and messaging, and setting outreach strategies and a timeline. It suggests priority stakeholder groups, opportunities for engagement, and key messages and tools that the Town can use to reach them. This framework also provides general information about best practices for communication within each section.

# Vulnerable Cape Cod: Coastal and Climate Hazards

The Cape Cod shoreline is highly vulnerable to multiple hazards: erosion, coastal storm flooding, and sea level rise. Flooding is a regular event in several areas during extreme high tides, and storm events cause flooding in many more places. Scientists anticipate that climate change will bring stronger storms with more precipitation and more frequent and extensive flooding. Even under existing conditions, flooding threatens more than 19% of the region's land area, with private property, businesses, and critical public infrastructure valued at tens of billions of dollars.

## CLIMATE CHANGE

*Scientists anticipate that climate change will bring stronger storms with more precipitation and the threat of more frequent and extensive flooding to the region.*



Sea level rise poses a significant threat to Cape Cod, with projected increases exacerbating flooding, elevating storm surges, and sending floodwaters farther inland. Increased flooding will potentially render first-response facilities inoperable and cause substantial property loss, economic impact, and habitat destruction. Development and infrastructure in floodplains would benefit from pre-disaster planning and action to improve resiliency during storm events. Wetlands buffers should be preserved or strategically undeveloped to help store increased stormwater runoff as the climate

changes. These buffers will also allow wetlands to migrate with changes in sea level, groundwater height, and precipitation. Rising floodwaters and sea levels are affecting more properties on Cape Cod, increasing the need for guidance specific to the character of Cape Cod's communities.

Flooding presents a significant risk to coastal development and natural resources. When the water rises, whether due to a flood, storm surge, or sea level rise, structures like buildings, sheds, fences, decks, and patios can alter the natural flow of water, redirecting and intensifying the force of flooding, which leads to increased erosion and damage to neighboring structures, infrastructure, and natural resources. Flooding can also lead to short- and long-term damage to marshes, beaches, and other natural features of the shoreline. Debris and hazardous materials carried away by floodwaters can add to the problem. In addition to flooding, storms and changing patterns in water movement can lead to erosion, damaging roads, buildings, beaches, and wetland areas.

Advanced planning and action are needed to improve the resilience of development and infrastructure in floodplains. Preserving wetlands buffers from development and supporting strategic undevelopment and retreat will help store increased stormwater runoff, reduce the amount of vulnerable infrastructure in harm's way, and allow wetlands to migrate as sea levels and precipitation patterns change. These measures are essential for enhancing the Cape's resilience to environmental challenges. Planning for Regional Climate Change Impacts

Climate hazards put vulnerable populations at risk and can cause loss of life, damage buildings and infrastructure, impair coastal environments, and impact a community's economic, social, and environmental well-being. The Cape Cod Commission has collaborated with Chatham and other Cape Cod towns on regional planning initiatives to address climate change impacts, including through regional plan development, the state's Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness (MVP) planning process, and other town-specific efforts such as hazard mitigation plans.

The Regional Policy Plan (RPP) is a roadmap for the region's growth policy and goals. The 2018 edition identifies climate change as a key regional challenge. The RPP supports a shared vision for the future of Cape Cod as a place of vibrant, sustainable, and healthy communities with a protected natural environment. In order to advance this shared vision, towns are encouraged to align their local comprehensive plans with the RPP.

The RPP Coastal Resiliency goal is to prevent or minimize human suffering, loss of life, and property or environmental damage resulting from storms, flooding, erosion, and sea level rise. To accomplish this, the RPP encourages minimizing development in floodplains, planning for sea level rise, erosion, and floods, and reducing the vulnerability of the built environment to coastal hazards. One of the nine performance measures in the 2018 RPP is changes in Floodplain Development. A decrease in floodplain development, adapting development through new codes or regulations, or protecting additional lands in strategic areas will help protect Cape Cod and increase its resiliency over the next several decades.

In 2021, the Commission published a regional Climate Action Plan (CAP) developed with extensive public outreach, including representation from all fifteen towns, key industries, and major

stakeholder groups. The CAP identifies strategies and actions to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and enhance local resiliency to climate threats. It also addresses the inherent challenges of the regional development pattern: Cape Cod has a heavily developed coastline, with residential areas that grew around its traditional maritime industries.

During the development of the CAP, municipal working groups identified regulatory challenges as a barrier to addressing climate priorities. In response, one of the CAP Priority Strategies is to draft and adopt floodplain bylaws to address development and redevelopment in vulnerable areas, intending to limit development in vulnerable areas, identify best practices for redeveloping in vulnerable areas, and identify appropriate strategies for conservation commissions and other town boards to take to remediate erosion and flooding that may impact vulnerable properties.

Implementing the CAP and its Priority Strategies will ultimately support regional actors as they adapt to climate impacts and mitigate Cape Cod's contributions to climate change. Chatham and the other 14 towns on Cape Cod have taken a proactive approach to climate change. Each town is a certified MVP community, having undergone the MVP Planning Process. This process involved a broad range of stakeholders and has been instrumental in assessing vulnerabilities and preparing for climate change, thereby enhancing community resilience.

## **BACKWARDS-LOOKING MAPS, LIMITED PROTECTIONS**

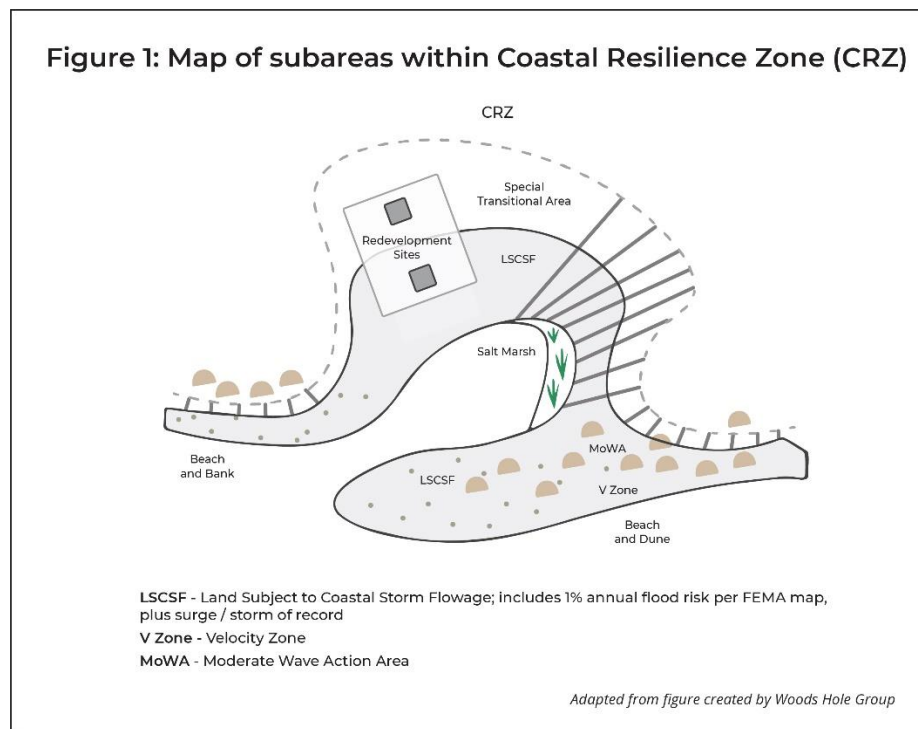
Current regulations and bylaws, including the current state building code, are based on FEMA Special Flood Hazard Areas as delineated on Flood Insurance Rate Maps. These are developed based on historical flood data and do not consider a future with rising sea levels and intensifying coastal storms. Current regulations and building codes may not adequately protect buildings and neighboring properties from these threats.

As sea levels continue to rise and storms become more frequent and severe, the limitations of relying on FEMA maps become increasingly apparent. This underscores the urgent need to revise regulations to account for future flood risks. Failure to do so will leave more structures susceptible to coastal floods, exacerbating flood impacts and resulting in significant damage during storm events.



## THE COASTAL RESILIENCE ZONE: REGULATING FOR THE FUTURE

Proposed new rules and zoning laws have been designed around a concept called the Coastal Resilience Zone.



The model bylaw and regulation allow for flexibility by encouraging the Town to select the best available data to identify future flooding. With that information, the Town can determine how proactive it wants to be in terms of ensuring that both new and existing structures are safeguarded against future sea level rise, protecting not only the buildings but also the fragile coastline and surrounding properties.

The Coastal Resilience Zone includes, in part, any land which is subject to inundation caused by future coastal storms. For example, if a Town is using the Massachusetts Coast Flood Risk Model as the data to inform its decisions, they might define the Coastal Resilience Zone to include the extent of flooded area projected for the 1% storm in the year 2070.

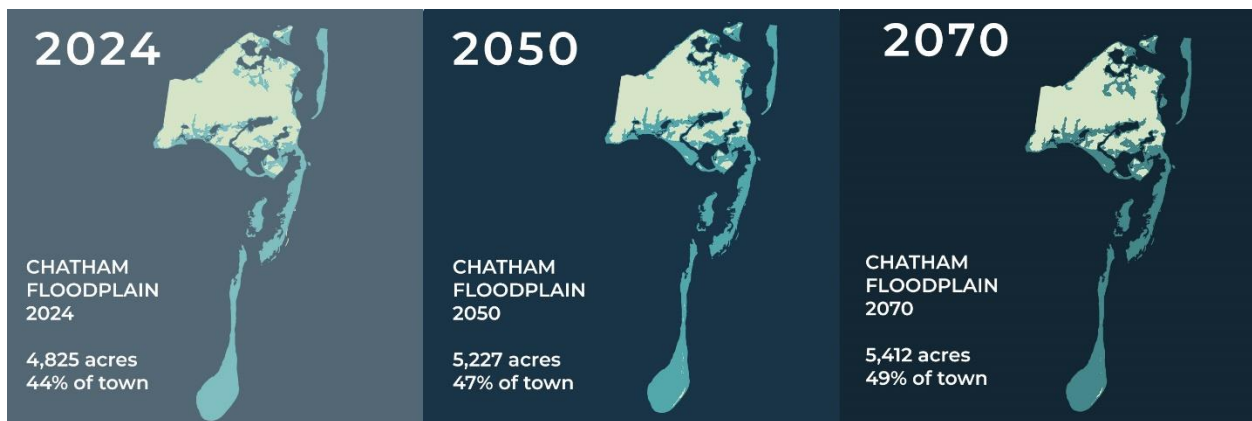
The Coastal Resilience Zone covers areas prone to current and future coastal flooding and erosion risks, including coastal wetlands, flood-prone areas, and specific coastal zones with varying levels of wave action. In almost all cases, the Coastal Resilience Zone includes and exceeds current FEMA flood zones.

## Chatham: Town Profile

Chatham is a picturesque coastal town located on the southeastern tip of Cape Cod, Massachusetts. Known for its charming downtown, beautiful beaches, and rich maritime heritage, Chatham attracts tourists and residents alike with its scenic vistas and vibrant community. Chatham is surrounded by water on three sides, with the Atlantic Ocean to the east, Nantucket Sound to the south, and Pleasant Bay to the north. This unique geographical positioning makes Chatham especially vulnerable to coastal hazards. With 66 miles of coastline, coastal resiliency is a major concern for Chatham.

**Population:** Chatham has a year-round population of 6,607 residents<sup>2</sup>.

**Seasonality:** 53.9% of Chatham's 7,529 housing units are used seasonally or as vacation properties<sup>3</sup>.



**Climate and Flood Risks:** Chatham faces significant risks from climate change and coastal flooding. According to updated climate models, the town's vulnerability is expected to increase dramatically in the coming decades:

- **FEMA Floodplain (2023)<sup>4</sup>:** 4,825 acres, or 44 percent of the town, are within the floodplain.
- **Projected Floodplain (MC-FRM) (2050):** by 2050, the floodplain area is projected to expand to encompass 5,226.74 acres, or 47 percent of the town's area.
- **Projected Floodplain (MC-FRM) (2070):** By 2070, nearly half of the town, or 5,412.15 acres (49 percent), is projected to be within the floodplain.

<sup>2</sup> American Community Survey, 2022 5-Year Estimates

<sup>3</sup> American Community Survey, 2022 5-Year Estimates

<sup>4</sup> FEMA covers coastal areas and freshwater ponds, MC-FRM covers only coastal areas.

These projections underscore the urgent need for Chatham to address its susceptibility to coastal flooding and the broader impacts of climate change, including sea-level rise, increased storm intensity, and changes in precipitation patterns.

**Economic and Ecological Impacts:** The increasing floodplain areas pose a threat not only to residential properties and infrastructure but also to local ecosystems and the town's economy, which heavily relies on tourism and the fishing industry. Coastal erosion, habitat loss, and saltwater intrusion into freshwater supplies are additional concerns.

Adopting the updated bylaw and zoning changes will help mitigate these risks and protect the community's future.

## PLANNING FOR CLIMATE ACTION AND COASTAL RESILIENCE

Chatham is actively engaged in long-term climate action planning, collaborating with regional and state agencies to develop strategies that address both mitigation and adaptation needs.

**Hazard Mitigation Plan:** The 2018 Hazard Mitigation Plan identifies coastal erosion, shoreline change, and flooding as hazards to the Town of Chatham. The Plan also identifies planning and zoning and floodplain regulations as mitigation strategies.

**Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness:** Coastal flooding, erosion, and sea level rise were all identified as top hazards to the Town of Chatham during a community workshop held in June 2019.

**Low-Lying Roads:** This project identified the roadways in Chatham most vulnerable to flooding and designed conceptual solutions for the top two most vulnerable roads.

**Chatham East-Facing Shoreline Coastal Resiliency and Management Assessment (2019):** With assistance from the Massachusetts Office of Coastal Zone Management (MCZM) Coastal Resilience Grant Program, the Town of Chatham developed a quantitative analysis of coastal processes to support a detailed analysis of potential shoreline management techniques that could be utilized to sustain the east-facing Chatham shoreline over the next 20-to-30 years.

**Pleasant Bay Association Climate Adaptation Action Plan:** The goal of the Climate Adaptation Action Plan is to protect the integrity of estuarine ecological functions, of intertidal and sub-tidal resources, and of low-lying public access points and water protection infrastructure in and around Pleasant Bay from climate-induced adverse effects. The Pleasant Bay Alliance includes the towns of Orleans, Chatham, Harwich, and Brewster.

**Coastal Resources:** A listing of the Town's coastal resources information.

## Purpose of the Regulations

The Commission and its partners designed a suite of floodplain tools, including wetlands regulations and zoning bylaw models to protect coastal wetland resources today and into the future as the frequency and intensity of storms and flooding increases.

While they can be implemented separately, the goal is for towns to adopt both so that town boards and commissions are issuing development permits that are consistent. These regulations can provide a new layer of flood protection for private and public property and vulnerable infrastructure and are critical to the preservation of the unique environment of Chatham.

These regulatory models build on the model resilience bylaw which promotes natural resource migration and reduces risk in the floodplain due to sea level rise.

### **The complementary wetlands regulations and zoning bylaw models for coastal floodplain development aim to:**

- Increase protection of our coastal resources and environment
- Allow for natural resource migration
- Reduce environmental harm and damage
- Plan for changes to the future extent of coastal resource areas
- Enhance the protection of private property, buildings, cultural and historic resources
- Give towns some consistency between regulations administered by different boards

This suite of regulations can help ensure that future development is responsive to evolving flood risks, supporting plans and programs to enhance coastal resilience and protect communities. This proactive approach minimizes potential future damage and ensures the long-term sustainability of the community amidst shifting environmental dynamics.

# Encouraging Change through Communications

Leaders should use communication strategies to inspire behavioral changes that make Cape Cod—and the world—more resilient to rising sea levels and flooding. Influencing people to understand and act on coastal development issues can be challenging, partly due to the high land and real estate costs in these locations. Sustained communication is essential to support the path forward to large-scale adaptation.

Thoughtful and strategic communication plays a crucial role. Storytelling can increase awareness, which is the first step in influencing individual change, leading to larger-scale change in Cape towns and the region. While the conversation around climate change may sometimes be weighed down by fear and pessimism, solution-oriented communication has the power to offer hope and understanding, bringing about positive change.

## INSPIRING CHANGE

One significant challenge of communications around regulation changes is the potential impact on existing conditions and expectations. For example, people might wonder how the new regulations could affect their ability to install a pool or rebuild after a storm. Educating residents about why the changes are needed, including the personal, economic, and environmental costs of inaction, should be an essential goal of communication efforts, especially among residential and commercial property owners impacted by regulation changes.

This communication plan can empower others to support local and regional change by providing information about how and why to engage in local decision-making. Town staff should share messages about events such as town meetings, provide educational resources, and encourage individual behavior change. Key messages that inspire audiences to get involved in local policymaking and provide details on how to engage with the government can effectively increase community participation.

## DEVELOPING A COMMUNICATIONS PLAN

When developing a communications plan, consider the following elements:

### **Goals and Objectives:**

- What are you hoping to achieve through communicating about the regulatory tools?
- Broad and specific objectives outline what communicators intend to achieve through outreach.

### **Key Audiences and Collaborators:**

- Who are you trying to reach, and what partners might help you to reach them?

### **Key Messages:**

- What are the primary messages you want to communicate?
- Can you organize them by audience segment, sector, issue, or other themes?

### **Outreach Strategies:**

- What mediums are best for each audience and message?

### **Milestones and Timelines:**

- What external and internal factors might determine your timing?
- How do you think about the plan's timeline versus the timeline of each campaign?

### **Defining and Measuring Success:**

- How will you know if your communications efforts have succeeded?
- How can you use what you've learned to improve future communications plans and campaigns?

## PROPOSED GOALS/OBJECTIVES FOR CHATHAM

A solid communication plan is executed using clear goals and objectives.

### Determining Goals:

- Assess the strengths and weaknesses of previous communications efforts.
- Identify opportunities to influence key stakeholders and encourage behavioral change.
- Address past challenges encountered in reaching audiences.
- Communication campaigns should generally aim to inform or influence behaviors in large audiences by increasing knowledge and providing a call to action.

Once goals are in place, set measurable and time-bound objectives that support them. Consider the human and financial resources available to ensure the objectives are achievable within the specified time frame. Each goal may have one or multiple objectives that support it; specific objectives should include a concrete, time-bound deliverable.

### Goals:

- Increase stakeholders' understanding of local coastal resiliency issues and the need to address them through an appropriate regulatory framework designed to reduce the coastal impacts of climate change.
- Build public understanding of and support for the regulatory changes.
- Increase cross-collaboration between boards, departments, agencies, and other stakeholder groups working to improve coastal resiliency in TOWN.
- Support the community in addressing the challenges around development and redevelopment in and around coastal resource areas.
- Update the local regulatory framework to reduce the coastal impacts of climate change on natural resources and the built environment, thereby increasing resiliency to future changes.

### Objectives:

- Proactively reach out to stakeholders and key interest groups that may be affected by these regulations to better understand their interests and determine what support is needed to mitigate those challenges.
- Engage Town board and committee members in stakeholder outreach when feasible, leveraging their expertise and direct implementation experience for presentations, newsletters, and speaking opportunities.
- Continue to develop and share online communications materials on coastal resiliency issues and potential solutions.
- Host and attend events that address local and regional coastal resiliency issues and possible solutions, particularly for non-traditional audiences.

## AUDIENCES, COLLABORATORS, & MESSAGING

**Audience Segmentation:** Segmenting audiences involves dividing a wider audience into specific groups with similar needs, values, or characteristics. This approach recognizes that different groups respond differently to communication tactics and messages, maximizing the impact by tailoring strategies to each group's needs.

### Benefits of Audience Segmentation:

- **Relevant Messaging:** Tailoring messages based on the values and needs of specific audiences makes communication more effective and efficient.
- **Communication Platforms:** Different groups use different channels. By segmenting audiences by demographic factors like age and education, communicators can connect more effectively.
- **Shared Barriers:** Addressing specific barriers common to a group increases the likelihood of action.
- **Calls to Action:** Different groups may require unique calls to action. Planning for these differences ensures smoother communications efforts.

### Target Audiences:

- Town staff, committees, and boards involved in conservation, planning, and zoning.
- Developers, homeowners, realtors, and local business owners connected to impacted properties.
- Potential collaborators and partner agencies, such as land trusts.

**Prioritizing Stakeholders:** Prioritize stakeholders based on their influence and interest in coastal development. Some may only need information, while others require consultation or collaboration. Partner with agencies and organizations that share similar goals to expand the audience and leverage online platforms for education.

**Equity Considerations:** Vulnerable populations are often disproportionately impacted by sea level rise and have less access to recovery resources. These include communities of color, low-income neighborhoods, youth, older adults, people with impairments, the homeless, and those with limited English proficiency.

### Inclusive Communication Strategies:

- **Transparency:** Use clear, straightforward language
- **Diverse Outreach Platforms:** Use various channels to reach different communities, considering language, location, age, access to digital resources, and the inclusion of stipends, food, and childcare services.



- **Translation Services:** Use translation services or fluent speakers to engage vulnerable populations effectively.
- **Engagement Process:** Ensure two-way communication to build relationships and trust, providing feedback opportunities through email, telephone, or social media.
- **Active Communication:** Proactively meet the audience where they are rather than expecting them to seek information.
- **Relevant Partnerships:** Partner with trusted local organizations, such as faith-based and social service organizations, to enhance message reception.
- **Empowerment through Engagement:** Engage vulnerable populations to impart key knowledge, identify barriers, and empower communities to influence outcomes. Community members can conduct surveys, facilitate meetings, and expand communication efforts.

## BEST PRACTICES IN ENVIRONMENTAL MESSAGING

Communicators can adopt these best practices when designing communications plans and campaigns around the Regulatory Tools:

### **Use Simple, Straightforward, Consistent Language:**

- Avoid technical jargon. Use accessible language for a wide range of audiences.
- Maintain consistent vocabulary across all platforms and communications campaigns.
- Unify messaging across different communication channels.

### **Utilize Compelling Visuals:**

- Engage your audience with photos, videos, or infographics.
- Use local images of Chatham to make the issue tangible and meaningful.
- Show real people and situations to illustrate the impact of sea level rise and storm surges on neighborhoods.

### **Highlight Positive Stories and Testimonials:**

- Share stories of people taking action and achieving positive results.
- Connect individuals to the broader community and the benefits of proactive climate adaptation.
- Make actions seem less overwhelming by showing others making similar decisions.

### **Tailor Messages to Each Target Audience Segment:**

- Consider the audience before crafting or adapting key messages.
- Make messages audience-specific to enhance their meaning and impact.

### **Use Data Effectively:**

- Incorporate statistics and other data to help people understand and remember the message.
- Highlight the local impacts of climate change and the need to support coastal resilience efforts

# Resource Toolkit

## MESSAGING

### Wetlands: A Critical Resource

Wetlands on Cape Cod, such as beaches, marshes, and land under the ocean, play a critical role in the local ecosystem and provide numerous environmental, economic, and social benefits.

**Flood Control:** Wetlands act as natural sponges, absorbing and storing excess water during heavy rains and storms. This helps reduce the risk of flooding in nearby areas, protecting homes, buildings, roads, and land from water damage.

**Water Quality:** Wetlands play a vital role in improving water quality by filtering pollutants, sediments, and nutrients from stormwater before it enters rivers, ponds, estuaries, and groundwater. They act as natural purification systems, helping to maintain clean and healthy water resources.

**Habitat for Biodiversity:** Biodiversity is essential for supporting all life on Earth, including humans. Without a wide range of animals, plants, and microorganisms, we cannot have healthy ecosystems that provide the air we breathe and the food we eat. Wetlands offer habitats for a diverse range of species, including many rare and endangered ones, and support specialized ecosystems like freshwater marshes, salt marshes, and bogs, which are home to unique flora and fauna adapted to wetland conditions.

**Wildlife Migration:** Wetlands serve as important stopover points and breeding grounds for migratory birds and other wildlife species. Massachusetts' coastal wetlands, in particular, are crucial for supporting resident and migratory bird populations along the Atlantic Flyway.

**Recreation and Tourism:** Wetlands offer opportunities for outdoor recreation and nature-based tourism, such as birdwatching, fishing, hiking, and kayaking. Cape Cod's wetlands contribute to the local economy by attracting visitors and supporting recreational businesses.

**Climate Resilience:** Wetlands help mitigate the impacts of climate change by sequestering carbon dioxide from the atmosphere and storing it in plant biomass and soil. They also provide natural buffers against sea-level rise and coastal erosion, helping to protect coastal communities from the effects of climate-related hazards.

**Erosion Control:** Wetland vegetation helps stabilize soil and prevent erosion along shorelines and coastal areas. This helps maintain the integrity of coastal habitats and protects valuable infrastructure such as roads, bridges, and buildings.

## Talking Points

*A set of talking points designed for use during meetings with key stakeholders, interviews with the press, and in conversation about the proposed wetlands regulations and zoning bylaw models.*

The proposed wetlands regulations and zoning bylaw models for coastal floodplain development are designed to protect wetland resources and property now and into the future.

The proposed wetlands regulations and zoning bylaw models for coastal floodplain development are flexible, adaptable, and compatible.

- **Flexible:** Choose your town's preferred planning horizon based on the best available data-- for example 2030, 2050, or 2070 if using the Massachusetts Coastal Flood Risk Model. Modify bylaw language based on your community's interests.
- **Adaptable.** Pick and choose the sections that work for your town and adapt to fit your needs.
- **Compatible.** Designed to be responsive and work in concert with the needs of your town and other regulatory/advisory boards.

**Support existing efforts:** Adopting more stringent floodplain regulations may assist Chatham with implementing resilience provisions of their comprehensive plan as well as other goals identified by the town to identify coastal resiliency and protect the community in a future with changed flood conditions.

**Enhanced Environmental Protection:** By adopting these regulations, communities affirm their dedication to safeguarding critical coastal resources such as wetlands, floodplains, and water quality. This conservation effort benefits the community by preserving biodiversity, enhancing recreational opportunities, and upholding the natural beauty and resilience of coastal areas.

Adopting these regulations demonstrates a commitment to sustainable development, environmental protection, and community resilience. By working together to implement these standards, towns can safeguard their coastal resources, mitigate flood risks, and promote a healthy and vibrant environment for current and future residents.

**Reduced Flood Risk:** Implementing performance standards for flood prevention and elevation requirements helps mitigate flood risks for residents and properties located within the Coastal Resilience Zone (CRZ). This proactive approach to flood control can minimize property damage, protect cultural resources, reduce insurance costs, and enhance community resilience in the face of extreme weather events.

**Improved Public Safety:** By ensuring that development activities adhere to established standards, communities can enhance public safety and well-being. Context-sensitive development can reduce

the likelihood of infrastructure and building failures, thereby protecting residents and visitors from harm.

**Economic Stability:** The development practices promoted by these regulations contribute to long-term economic stability within our community. Stronger, less vulnerable buildings and infrastructure mean fewer people in harm's way and reduced damage to clean up following a storm or a flood. This reduces demand for, risks to, and the cost of emergency responders. Preserving coastal resources and enhancing resilience to climate change impacts can safeguard property values, support tourism and recreation industries, and attract investment in resilient infrastructure projects.

**Community Resilience to Climate Change:** Climate change poses significant challenges to coastal communities, including sea-level rise, increased storm intensity, and shoreline erosion. By adopting regulations that address these challenges head-on, communities can enhance their resilience to climate change impacts, protecting both natural habitats and built infrastructure for future generations.

**Strengthened Sense of Community:** Engaging in collaborative efforts to adopt and implement these regulations fosters a sense of community pride and cohesion. By working together to protect coastal resources and promote sustainable development, residents, businesses, and local organizations can build stronger, more resilient communities that thrive in the face of environmental challenges.

**Environmental Education and Awareness:** The adoption of regulations provides opportunities for environmental education and awareness initiatives within the community. By informing residents about the importance of coastal conservation and flood resilience measures, communities can empower individuals to take proactive steps to protect their environment and advocate for sustainable policies and practices.

**Legal and Regulatory:** Adhering to established regulations ensures that communities remain current with state and federal laws governing coastal development and environmental protection. This not only reduces the risk of legal disputes and fines but also fosters positive relationships with regulatory agencies and neighboring communities.

**Long-Term Sustainability:** Ultimately, the adoption of these regulations promotes the long-term sustainability of coastal communities. By integrating future flood conditions into land use planning and development decision-making, communities can thrive in harmony with their natural surroundings, preserving coastal resources for future generations to enjoy and benefit from.

**Overall,** the adoption of these regulatory tools offers numerous benefits to communities, including enhanced environmental protection, reduced flood risk, improved public safety, economic stability, climate resilience, strengthened community ties, environmental education, regulatory compliance, and long-term resiliency. By embracing these benefits, communities can build a more resilient future for all residents and stakeholders.

**Long-Term Resilience:** By implementing these regulations, towns can reduce their exposure to climate change impacts, such as sea level rise and increased storm intensity. Investing in proactive measures now can mitigate future risks and protect both property and natural habitats in the face of evolving environmental challenges.

## FLOODPLAIN DATA VIEWER

An online, interactive map that illustrates the potential effects of historic and future floods. Many uses are possible, such as viewing horizontal and vertical flood risk, assisting home buyers or owners in understanding their flood risk, illustrating the need and helping make the case for higher regulatory standards.

**EXPLORE:** [Floodplain Data Viewer](#)

## STAKEHOLDER AND MEDIA CONTACTS

### STAKEHOLDERS

#### Town Departments

- [Chatham Conservation Division](#)
- [Natural Resources Department](#)
- [Coastal Resources](#)
- [Building Division](#)
- [Town Manager](#)

#### Town Boards and Committees

- [Select Board](#)
- [Conservation Commission](#)
- [Zoning Board of Appeals](#)
- [Open Space Committee](#)
- [Energy and Climate Action Committee](#)
- [Chatham Summer Residents Advisory Committee](#)

#### Homeowners Associations

- [Cannon Hill Association](#)
- [Riverbay Estates](#)
- [Great Hill Estates Association](#)
- [Old Village Association Chatham](#)

#### Business Associations

- [Chatham Chamber of Commerce](#)
- [Cape Cod Chamber of Commerce](#)

### Regional Organizations

- [Association to Preserve Cape Cod](#)
- [Cape Cod Commission](#)
- [Cape Cod Climate Change Collaborative](#)
- [Cape Cod National Seashore](#)
- [Mass Audubon Cape Cod](#)

### State Organizations

- [Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection](#)
- [Massachusetts Office of Coastal Zone Management](#)
- [Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation](#)

## MEDIA CONTACTS

### Newspapers

- [Cape Cod Chronicle](#)
- [Cape Cod Times](#)
- [Provincetown Banner](#)
- [Provincetown Independent](#)

### Radio Stations

- [Cape Cod Broadcasting](#)  
WQRC, WOCN, WFCC, WKPE, CapeCod.Com
- [Coxswain Communications](#)  
PIXY, Frank, Y-101, Koffee
- [Cape Cod and Islands NPR](#)
- [Outermost Community Radio, WOMR](#)
- [IHeart Media](#)  
WXTK, WCOD

### Community Access Television

- [Lower Cape TV](#)
- [Provincetown TV](#)
- [Cape Media Center](#)
- [Truro Government Access](#)
- [Wellfleet Government Access](#)
- [Eastham Government Access](#)



- [Chatham Government Access](#)

CAPE COD COMMISSION

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