



**For Immediate Release**

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## **Mayor Keeler Launches “Cleaner Greener Cohoes” Environmental Initiative**

Cohoes, NY (February 6, 2020) – Mayor Bill Keeler is launching a “Cleaner Greener Cohoes” initiative, taking a comprehensive approach to creating a more environmentally sustainable city.

“From buildings, to street lighting, to green spaces, to recycling, every aspect of how people live, work, and play in Cohoes will be considered as we map a cleaner greener future for our community,” Mayor Keeler said.

The framework for “Cleaner Greener Cohoes” will be Governor Andrew Cuomo’s Climate Smart Communities (CSC) program, designed to expedite progress in mitigating and adapting to climate change at the local level. Participating cities gain access to targeted grant programs, rebates for a wide variety of initiatives, along with free technical assistance, training, and planning tools.

Though initiated in 2009 during the administration of then Mayor John McDonald, the CSC program has been dormant for a decade. “Clearly Cohoes has a lot of catching up to do, but just in our first 30 days we have laid the groundwork for progress,” Mayor Keeler said.

At the first Common Council meeting of 2020, Mayor Keeler proposed and the City Council approved a resolution re-establishing the City’s commitment to the Climate Smart Communities program, establishing City Planner Joe Seman-Graves as program coordinator, and allowing for the creation of a Cohoes Climate Smart Community Task Force.

The city is seeking public input, expertise, and energy to help craft, implement, and celebrate climate smart community projects. “We want to tap the time, talent, and expertise of people across our community including business owners, homeowners, landlords, tenants, students, residents who know the history of Cohoes, and newcomers who are just beginning to explore how they can become involved in the community,” City Planner Seman-Graves said, inviting Cohoes residents to join the task force.

In conjunction with jumpstarting the Climate Smart Communities program, Mayor Keeler is working to accelerate progress on a “Cleaner Greener Cohoes” by:

\*Meeting with clean energy expert U.S. Rep Paul Tonko (D-NY20), for guidance on Federal funding opportunities and technical assistance for cities to become more environmentally sustainable. Congressman Tonko is Chair of the House Energy and Commerce Committee's Subcommittee on the Environment and Climate Change, a member of House Natural Resources Committee, and former president and CEO of the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority.

\*Coordinating with NYS Assemblymember John McDonald to bring weatherization workshops and other similar energy efficiency education programs to Cohoes residents.

\*Requesting that NYSERDA and the New York State Power Authority (NYPA) provide a comprehensive energy audit of Cohoes City Hall, the Cohoes Public Library, the Cohoes Music Hall, and other city buildings, to identify opportunities to conserve energy and reduce costs to the taxpayers.

\*Engaging with NYPA to develop a LED street lighting program for the City of Cohoes, designed to reduce energy consumption and costs.

\*Revitalizing the Cohoes Erie Canal Parkway and other long-neglected city parks and green spaces.

“Creating a ‘cleaner greener Cohoes’ is the smart thing to do economically and it is the right thing to do for the health and long-term sustainability of our community. We owe it to ourselves, our children, and our grandchildren,” Mayor Keeler said.

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