



ROCKLAND P.L.U.S.  
Planning Land Use with Students  
**RPLUS 2020 Key Words**

**Sustainability:** the ability to meet the needs of the present without compromising future generations ability to meet their needs; balancing the 3 pillars of sustainability (society, economy, environment).

**Climate Change:** long-term change in average weather patterns defining Earth’s local, regional, and global climates; changes in Earth’s climate since early 1900s are primarily driven by human activities.

**Climate Change Resilience:** The ability to anticipate, prepare for, and respond to climate related hazardous events. Resilience involves assessing risks, and taking steps to: *Absorb, Respond, Reconstruct*

**Ecosystem Services:** many benefits that humans freely gain from the natural environmental and properly functioning ecosystems, like clean air & water, seafood, from the ocean, plant pollination

**Climate Smart Community:** a New York State program that helps local governments take action to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and adapt to a changing climate.

- *Registered* communities have made a commitment to act by passing a CSC pledge.
- *Certified* communities have completed and documented actions to mitigate and adapt.

**Energy Star:** a program run by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) promoting energy efficiency through information on products, devices and labeling.

**Circular Economy:** a circular economy focuses on keeping products in use as long as possible to get the maximum use from our resources, and then recovering and regenerating materials for further use.

**Economic Impact:** examines the effect of an event on the economy in a specified area, ranging from a single neighborhood to the entire globe.

**Cost Benefit Analysis:** a systematic approach to estimating and weighing the strengths and weakness of alternatives in order to determine the best approach to achieving benefits while preserving saving.

**External Costs or Externalities:** refers to the hidden costs or uncompensated social or environmental effects.

- *Example:* when people buy fuel for a car, they pay for the production of fuel (internal cost), but they do NOT pay for the hidden costs of burning that fuel, like air pollution or health impacts.

**True Costs:** includes the cost of negative externalities into the pricing; there is a difference between the ‘market price’ of the product vs how it may negatively affect the environment or public health.

**Greenhouse Gas Emissions:** a gas that absorbs infrared radiation (net heat energy) trapping and holding heat in the atmosphere; causes the greenhouse effect (like a warm blanket insulating the planet). Examples: water vapor, carbon dioxide, methane, nitrous oxide, and ozone.

**Human (Ecological) Footprint:** measures human demand on nature: the quantity of nature it takes to support people or an economy. Each of us has an ecological footprint that can be calculated.

**Public Transit:** a system of transport for passengers by group travel systems available for use by the general public that is managed on a schedule, operated on established routes, and charges a fee.

**Bus Rapid Transit (BRT):** Bus transit with designated traffic-free lanes and other features that allow them to run like trains.

**Hybrid Electric Vehicles:** Hybrid vehicle uses two types of power (electric motor and combustion engine) during driving to maximize energy/fuel efficiency.

**Complete Streets:** designed and operated to enable safe access for all users including pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists, and transit riders of all ages and abilities.

**Pedestrian Friendly Venues/Walkability:** a measure of how friendly an area is to walking. Factors include presence of footpaths, sidewalks, or pedestrian right of way traffic, and safety.

**Preserve Historical/Cultural Character:** Keeping intact and enhancing areas around structures of historic or cultural importance during building and development.

**Green Infrastructure:** an approach to water management that works with nature to protect, restore and mimic the natural water cycle. Includes planting trees, restoring wetlands, green roofs, swales.

**Recycled Material Design:** conserve resources by reusing them rather than using new materials.

**Native Plants for Water Conservation:** using native plants adapted to the local climate in order to eliminate the use of sprinklers and conserve water, fertilizer, pesticides.

**Storm Drain:** infrastructure designed to drain excess rain from impervious surfaces.

**Pervious Paver:** porous paving material that allows stormwater to be absorbed through its surface and put back into the ground below rather than as run off into a storm drain system.

**Water Sense:** A water-efficiency certification provided for water fixtures that reduce water consumption.

**Watershed:** a catchment area, or area or land where precipitation collects and drains off into a common outlet such as a river, bay, or other body of water.

**Solar Energy:** energy that is generated by the sun converted into thermal or electrical energy. It is the cleanest and most abundant renewable energy on earth.

**Geothermal Heating and Cooling:** geothermal energy circulates water through the ground below a home to circulate thermal energy from the interior of the earth to heat and cool a home or building.