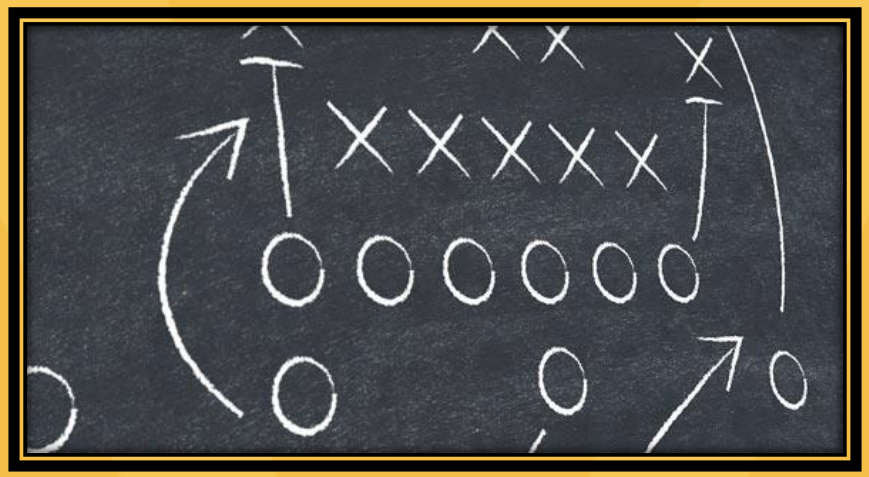

Making a Game Plan for Getting Certified

February 21, 2018

Presenter

Samantha McGraw
Program Manager

Agenda

- Program Overview
  - What is Sustainable Jersey?
  - Certification Benefits
- Moving Toward Certification
  - Certification steps, requirements, actions, Master Action Tracking Spreadsheet
- Applying for Certification
  - 2018 Certification Cycle
  - Online Application
  - Why actions are not approved
- Actions & Resources to Help You Get Ahead
- Final Thoughts & Takeaways

Program Overview

Regional Hub Event

Some of Our Staff

Regional Hub Event

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What is Sustainable Jersey?

Sustainable Jersey is a nonprofit organization that provides tools, trainings and financial incentives to support communities as they pursue sustainability programs.

- Identifies **actions** to help towns become sustainable
- Provides **tools, resources, and guidance for** progress
- Provides access to **grants and funding**

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Participating Communities

- Program start: February 2009
- 445 (79%) NJ municipalities participating
- 89% of NJ's population lives in these communities
- 200 municipalities certified:
  - 152 towns at bronze level
  - 48 towns at silver level

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Actions: Prosperity, Planet, People

PROSPERITY

ENERGY EFFICIENCY	POINTS
Energy Audits for Municipal Facilities*	20-50
High Efficiency Municipal Buildings	10-20
FOOD	
Farmland Preservation	
Food Production	
Planning for Local Food Produ	
Support Local Food	
LOCAL ECONOMIES	
Buy Local Programs	
Green Business Recognition P	
Green Jobs/Economic Develop	
OPERATIONS AND MAINTENA	
Green Fleets*	
Adopt Behavioral Policies	
Green Purchasing Program	
Grounds and Maintenance	

PEOPLE

ARTS/CULTURE/HISTORIC PR	
Historic Preservation	
Strengthening School Arts Pro	
COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP A	
Create Green Team*	
Community Education and Ou	
Energy Outreach and Incentive	
Education for Sustainability Pr	
School-Based Energy Conserv	

PLANET

GREEN DESIGN	POINTS
Green Building Policy/Resolution	5
Green Building Training	5
Green Design Commercial and Residential Buildings	5-20
Green Design Municipal Buildings	10-20
GREENHOUSE GAS	
Municipal Carbon Footprint*	10
Community Carbon Footprint	10
Climate Action Plan	10
Wind Ordinance	10
INNOVATIVE DEMONSTRATION PROJECTS	
Geothermal	10
Green Roofs	10
Raingardens	10
Solar	10
Wind	10
Other	10
LAND USE & TRANSPORTATION	
Sustainable Land Use Pledge*	10
Complete Streets Program	20
Municipal Planning & Zoning Self-Assessment	10
Sustainability Master Plan Revision	20
NATURAL RESOURCES	
Natural Resource Inventory*	20
Water Conservation Ordinance*	20
Conservation Easements	10-15
Environmental Commission	10

- Municipalities choose from the menu of 150 actions to accumulate the required points
- Actions created by 19 issue-based Task Forces
- Task Forces comprised of relevant experts, local leaders, state and federal agencies, and stakeholders
- Task Forces meet regularly to add and amend actions

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Sustainable Jersey “Actions” in Action

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Certification Benefits

- Save money. Get money.
  - Implement actions that lead to cost savings (energy, green fleets, solar, water, garbage bills)
  - Improve efficiency, cut waste, stimulate local economy
  - Access to incentives and grants
- Gain access to training, tools and expert guidance.
- Get recognized. Promote your town.
- Conserve valuable resources. Protect the environment.

Edison Township Hybrid For Municipal Work

Annual Awards

Moving Toward Certification

Certification Steps

#1
Pass resolution & register municipality online

#2
Form ***mandatory*** green team

#3
Implement actions to scored 150 or 350 points and meet other criteria

#4
Submit documentation for each action

***Certification awarded after review and verification*

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Develop a Plan

1. Organize green team
2. Review actions & requirements already in progress in your community
3. Identify a group leader & form small groups to work on each specific action
4. Develop task list with target completion dates
5. Track progress & adjust plan as needed

Reach out to Sustainable Jersey for guidance and support: info@sustainablejersey.com or 609-771-2938.

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Certification Requirements

- Total of at least 150 points
- Mandatory Green Team
- Implement 2 of 12 priority actions
- Actions completed in 6 of 18 categories

- Total of at least 350 points
- Mandatory Green Team
- Implement 3 of 12 priority actions
- Actions completed in 8 of 18 categories

http://www.sustainablejersey.com/actions-certification/certification-overview/

Action Categories

- Animals in the Community
- Arts & Culture
- Brownfields
- Community Partnership & Outreach
- Diversity & Equity
- Emergency Management & Resiliency
- Energy (Formerly Energy Efficiency)
- Food
- Green Design
- Health & Wellness
- Innovation & Demonstration Projects
- Land Use & Transportation
- Local Economies
- Natural Resources
- Operations & Maintenance
- Public Information & Engagement
- Sustainability & Climate Planning
- Waste Management

http://www.sustainablejersey.com/actions-certification/actions/

★ Priority Actions ★

- Climate Adaptation: Flooding Risk
- Diversity on Boards & Commissions
- Energy Tracking & Management (earn up to 20 points!)
- Energy Efficiency for Municipal Facilities* (consolidates Implement Energy Efficiency Measures and Energy Audit)
- Fleet Inventory
- Green Business Recognition Program (earn up to 20 points!)
- Municipal Carbon Footprint
- Natural Resource Inventory
- Prescription Drug Safety and Disposal
- Recycling and Waste Reduction Education & Compliance
- Sustainable Land Use Pledge
- Water Conservation Ordinance

http://www.sustainablejersey.com/actions-certification/certification-overview/

Most Popular Actions

- **Start Up Actions**
  - Actions that have been attempted the most by municipalities and has the HIGHEST success rate of approval upon review.
- **Some popular action areas include:**
  - Animals in the Community
  - Community Partnership & Outreach
  - Energy Efficiency
  - Innovation & Demonstration Projects
  - Natural Resources
  - Operations & Maintenance
  - Waste Management

Master Action Tracking Spreadsheet

- **Download from Website**
  - On Green Team Resources and Presentations Page accessed under the Actions & Certification heading, and "Help" area of online application
- **Helpful Planning Tool**
  - Track progress & checklist for uploading materials
- **Spreadsheet Includes:**
  - Action name, submission requirements, shelf life, resubmission requirements, points

Applying for Certification

GET CERTIFIED

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2018 Certification Cycle Timeline

June 3	Initial Application Deadline • Indicate actions you plan to complete for credit by marking "Completed"
Early-July	First round review comments provided
September 19**	Revision deadline to be eligible for recognition at the 2018 Sustainable Jersey Luncheon during the NJLM Conference
Mid-October	Second round review comments provided
November 18	FINAL application deadline
Mid-December	Final decision on pending applications

NOTE: If the majority of your actions do not have documentation, only mark enough actions completed to meet the minimum requirements for bronze certification. Additional actions can be added throughout the cycle.

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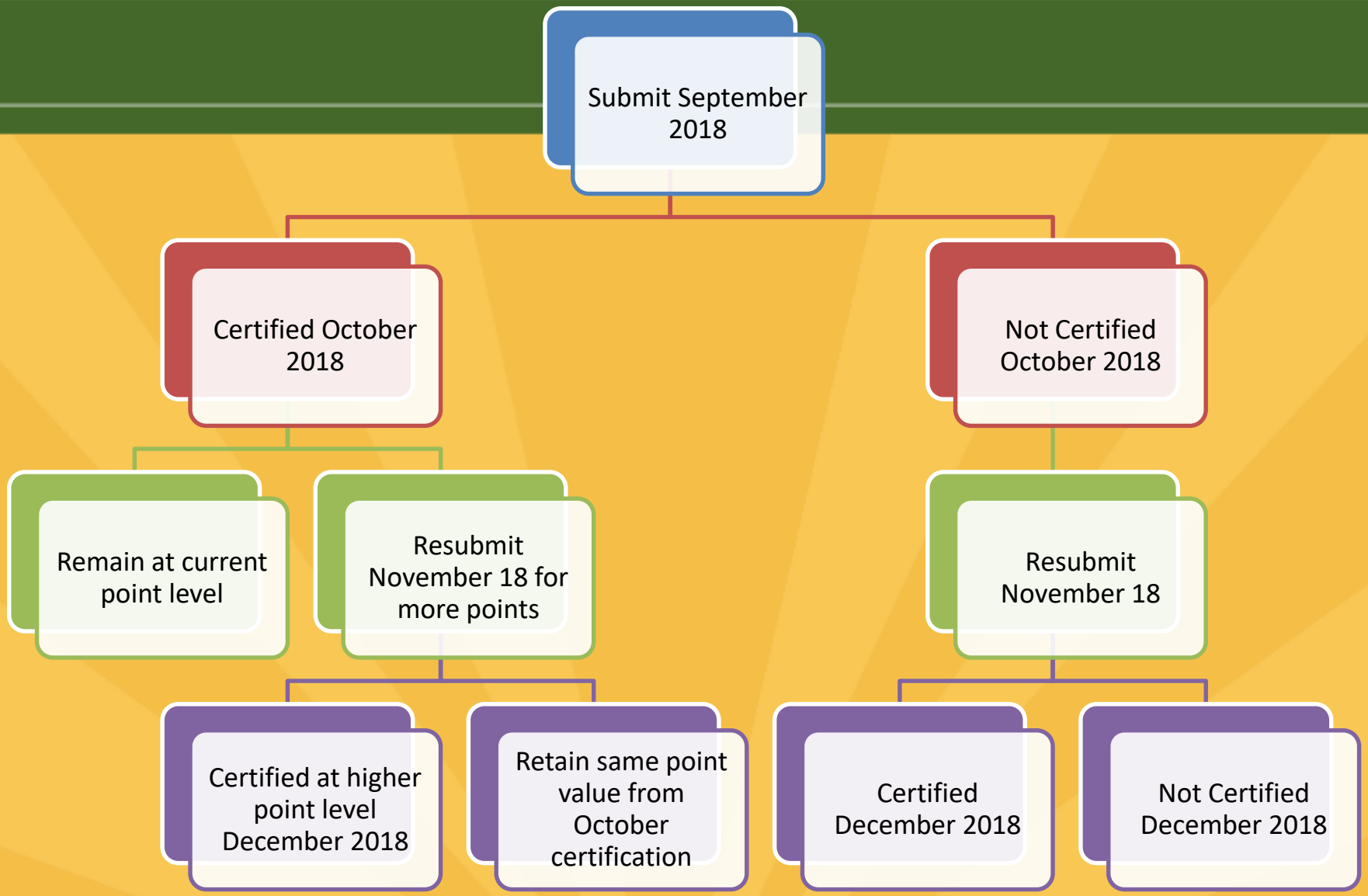
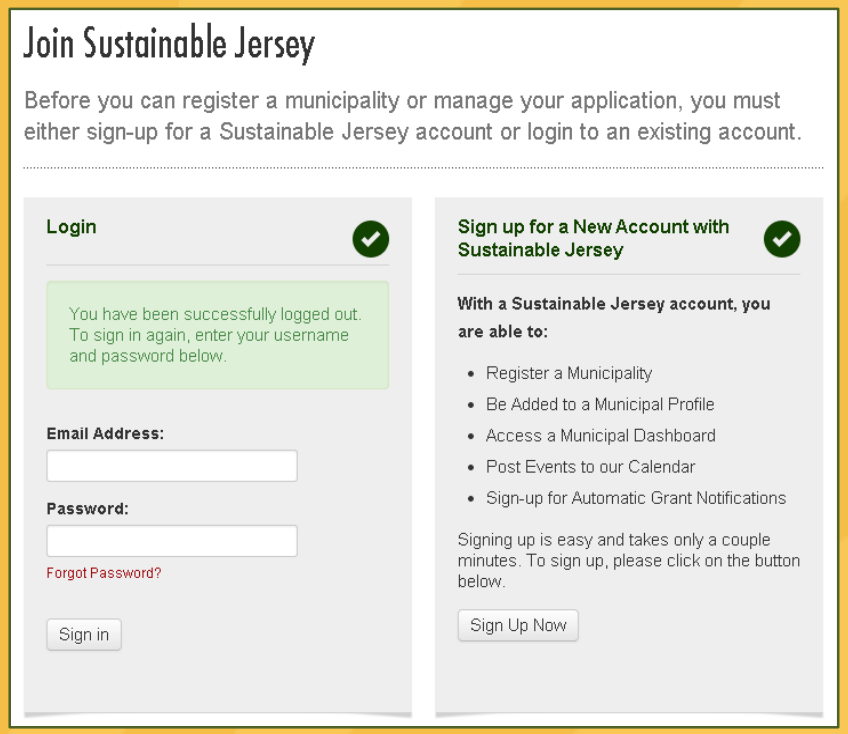
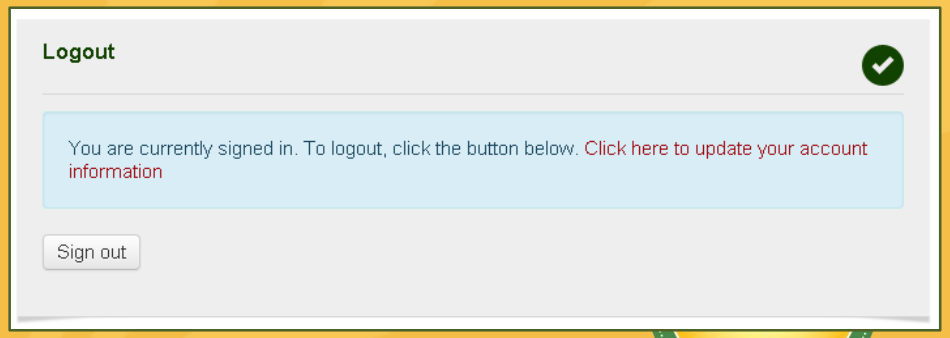

Submit September 2018
Certified October 2018
Not Certified October 2018
Remain at current point level
Resubmit November 18 for more points
Resubmit November 18
Certified at higher point level December 2018
Retain same point value from October certification
Certified December 2018
Not Certified December 2018

Accessing Your Application

- Sign up for an account (if you do not already have one)
  - Validate your email address!
- Login on the Website
  - Primary Contact: Same email address and password
  - Others: Sign Up for an Account
- Log Out of the Website
  - Click “You are signed in button” and press “sign out”





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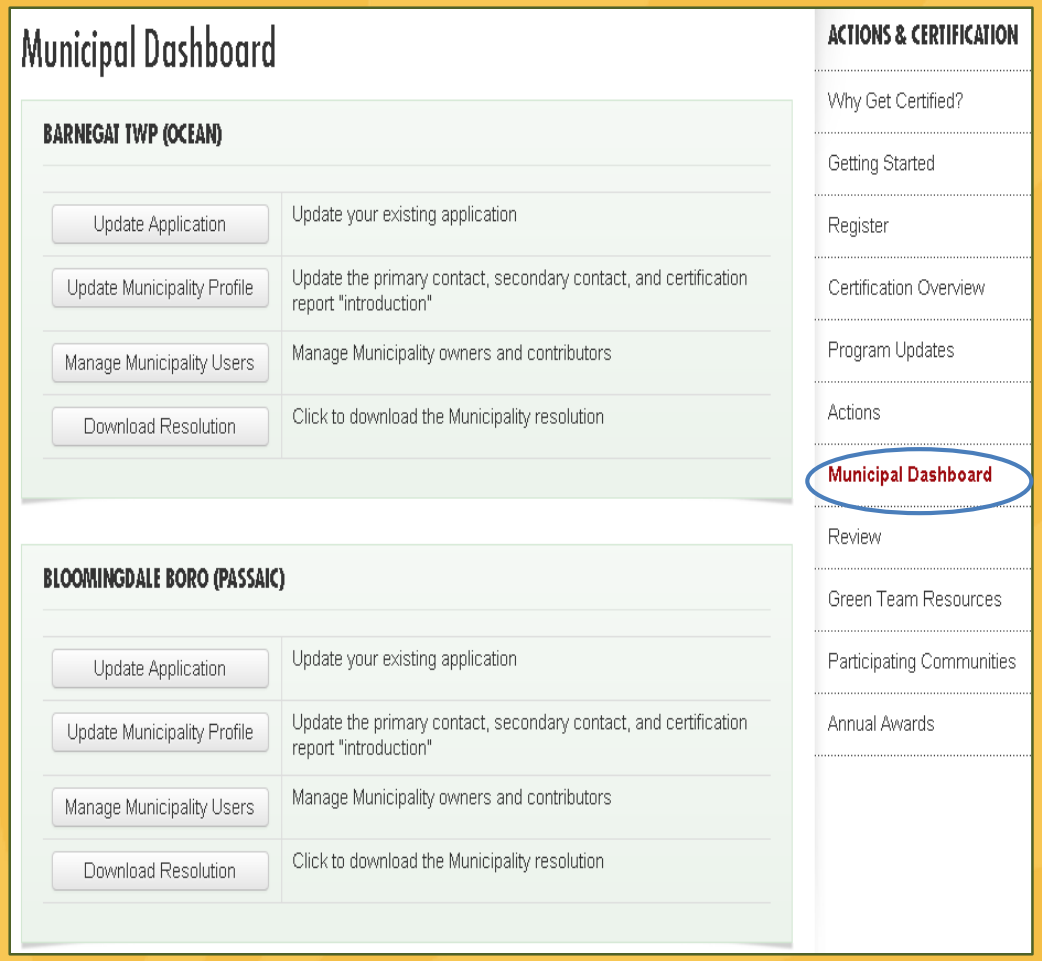
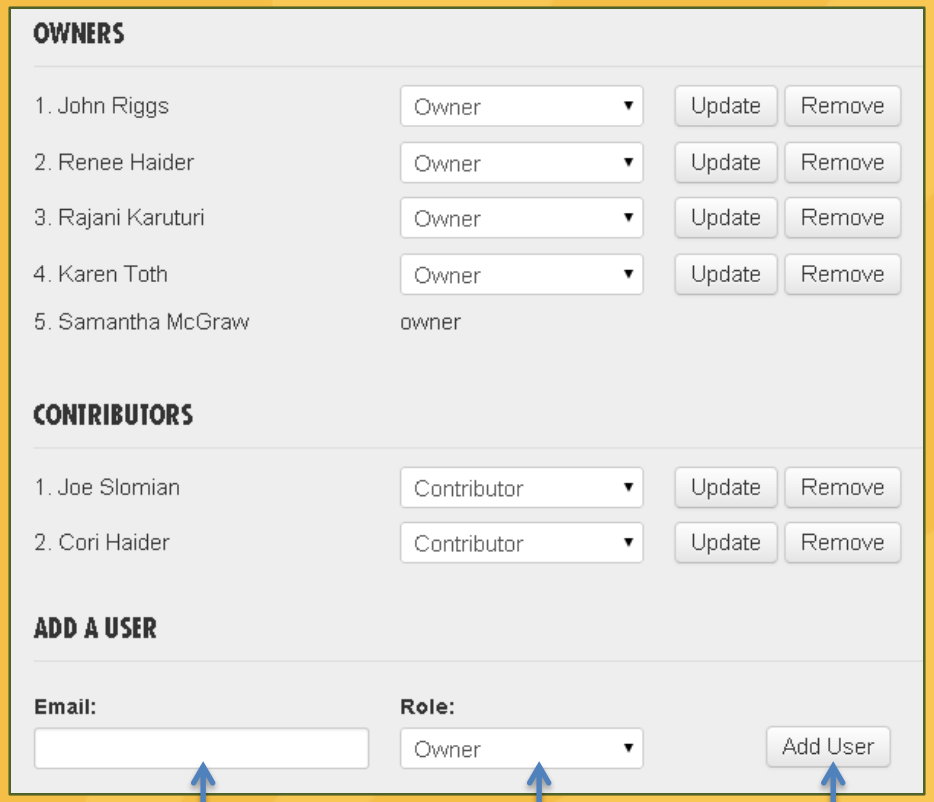
Municipal Dashboard

- Easily access important information relevant to certification
- All accounts for which you are a user will appear
- Four buttons allow you to perform different functions
- <u>Download Resolution</u>: view the resolution submitted to register with the program. It does **not** need to be updated and is different than the **green team resolution** required for certification



Manage Municipal Users

- Add additional users to contribute toward your application.
- Both owners & contributors can access, edit, and submit the application.
- Owners can add/remove other owners & contributors; contributors can only add other contributors



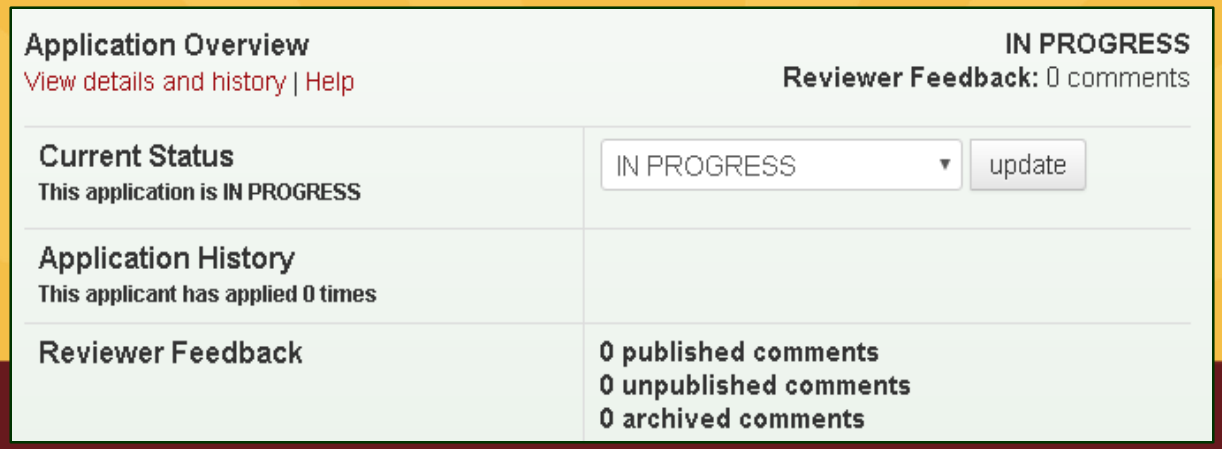
Enter email address

Designate role

Execute

Working on Your Application

- Choose “Begin/Update Application” on Municipal Dashboard
- Think of your application as a living document; a file-cabinet that will constantly change and get updated even after certified
- See your application’s current status, history, reviewer feedback, and access informational documents in the “Help” area.
- You can also search actions and track your progress with the Action Totals box.



Action Statuses

3 Statuses for New Applications

Unplanned	• Default status if action has never been worked on
Planned	• Changed by user to indicate it will or has been worked on
Completed	• Changed by a user to indicate the action submission is completed including the uploading of supporting documentation

Additional Statuses

– Must Revise, Approved, Not Approved, Expired

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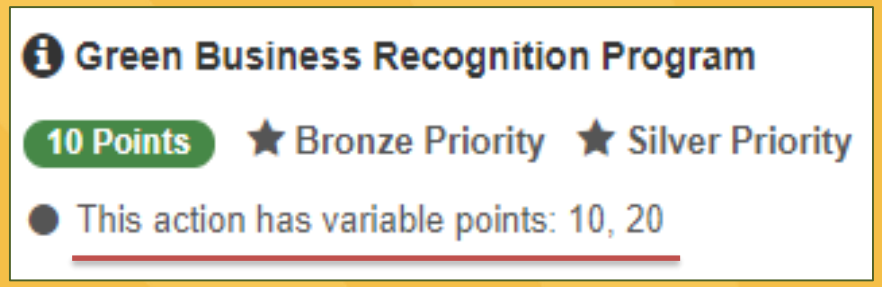
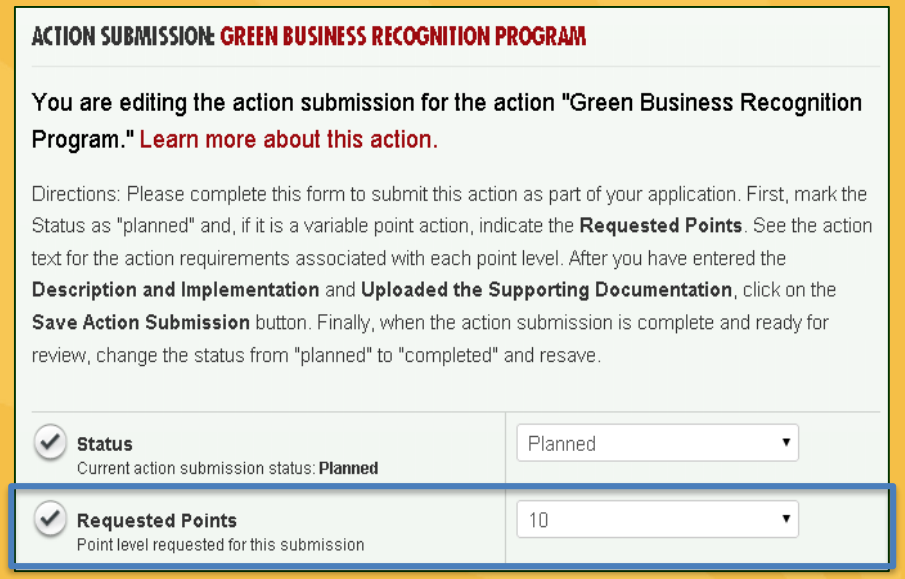
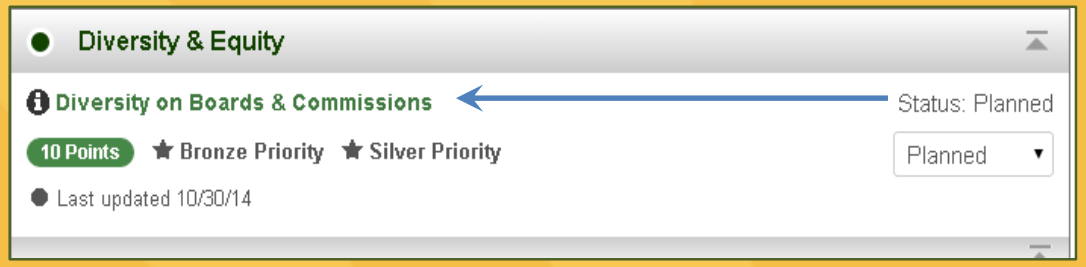
Variable Point Actions





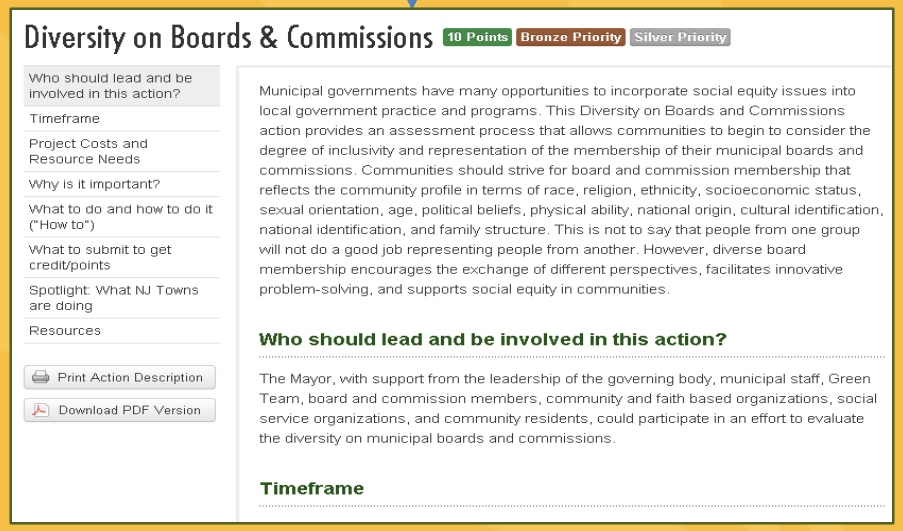
- The points awarded for the action will vary based on what has been accomplished
- For example, Green Business Recognition Program is based on implementing a program, adopting NJSBR criteria, and promoting/encouraging participation in sector-specific green business recognition programs
- Application view defaults lowest point value until changed by user
- User selects point value supported by the documentation as part of the submission from the drop down menu
- Reviewer confirms point value selected or changes based on review of the documentation

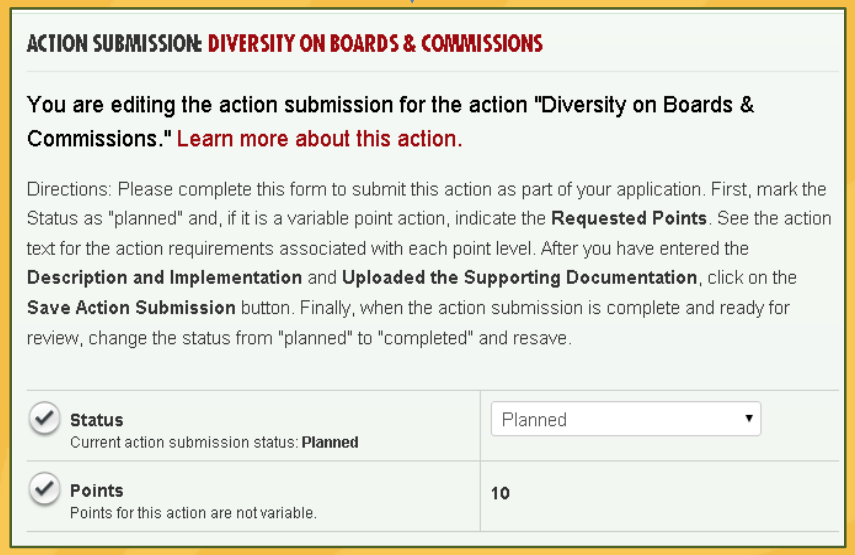
Action Listing



- Click on action title to go to **Action Submission Page**

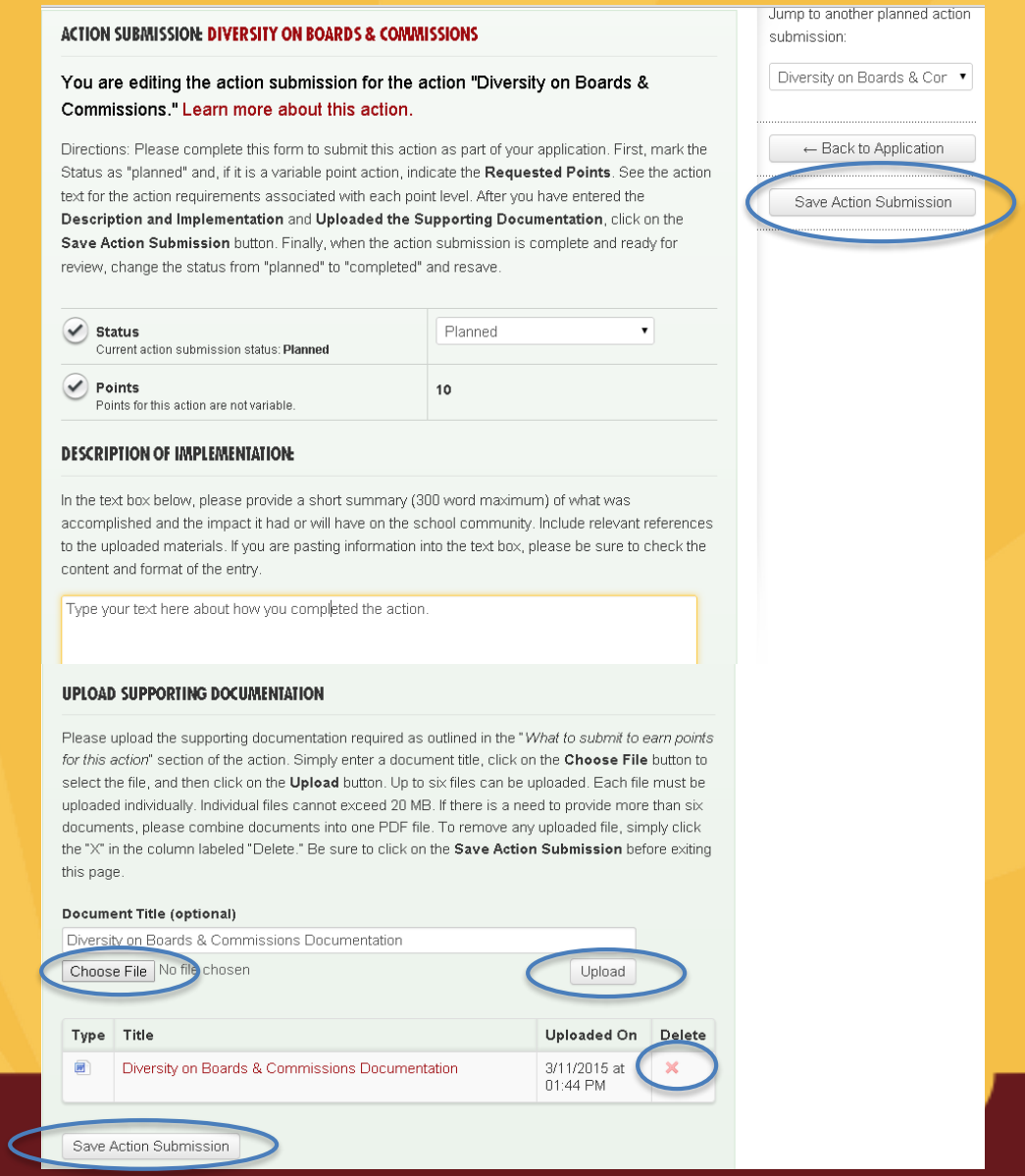
- Click on to view action





Action Submission Page

- This is where you provide the documentation for a specific action
- Update the status of the action
- Enter a narrative description
- Upload documentation
  - Successful upload appears in box below
  - Remove documents by clicking red “x”
- Save action submission



Tips for Action Submissions

#1

Read the action descriptions in order to understand what the action requires

#3

Upload documents that support the information contained in the summary

#2

Use Description of Implementation box to provide a summary of what was accomplished. Accomplishments should be in-sync with the action

#4

Type in descriptive document titles for all uploaded files (i.e. Green Purchasing Policy or Outreach Materials)

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Submitting Your Application

- Track your progress
  - Use SEARCH ACTIONS to view different point combinations using the status filters

SEARCH ACTIONS

Type in a word(s) to identify all actions with that word(s) in the title

☐ Planned ☐ Completed ☐ Must Revise ☐ Not Approved ☐ Approved ☐ Expired

To identify actions by status, check the desired box or boxes above. The Action Totals box at right will also reflect only those actions selected. Click on the Clear Search button to return to the full action listing.

Search Actions | Clear Search

ACTION TOTALS
(Completed, Approved)

Mandatory	1/1
Priority	3/12
Total	215/1490
Categories	6/19
Actions	19/139

If all completed action submissions are approved, this application will qualify for bronze certification.

To achieve silver certification, see certification criteria above.

Submit Application for Review and Certification

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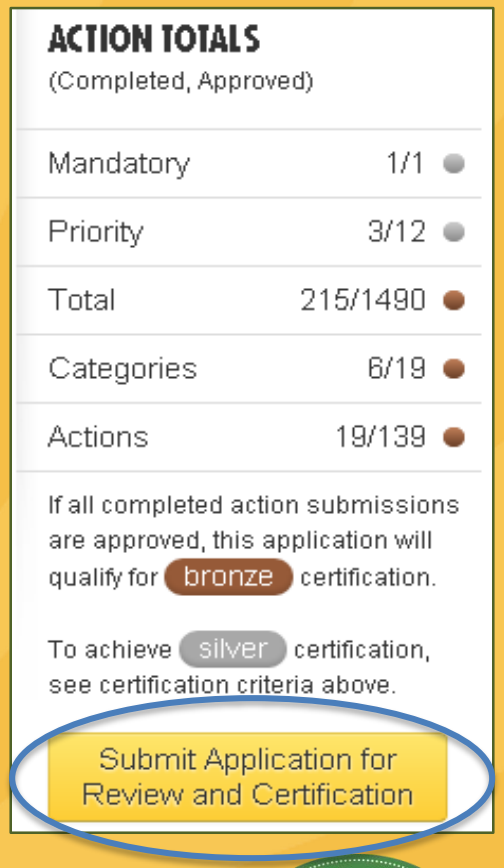
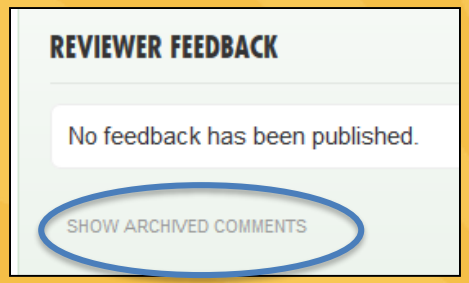
Submitting Your Application

- Submit application
  - Mark actions that you plan to complete for credit as “completed”
  - Points will automatically recalculate in the Action Totals Box
  - Submit button turns yellow when the combination of Approved and Completed actions meets all the minimum certification requirements
  - Press submit button
  - Once submitted Completed actions are locked from editing



Reviewer Feedback

- All users notified by email when application is unlocked and ready for editing.
- Subject matter expert will review the action and provide feedback. Action will be marked “Approved” or “Must Revise.”
  - Must Revise feedback will summarize what more is needed to have the action approved.
  - Feedback is at the bottom of the action submission page or top of the application.
- Feedback on Not Approved actions from a previous submission can be found by clicking “Show Archived Comments”



Why Actions Are Not Approved

Pitfall	How to Overcome
Action Implemented Expired/Too old	Review Submission Requirements; Update action as necessary.
Proper documentation not submitted	Double check action submission requirements and documentation uploaded
Misinterpretation of Action Goals	Be sure to closely read the “What to Do” and “What to Submit” portion of the action to verify that what you plan on submitting is in line with the intent of the action
Seeking credit for same activity under two different actions	One activity may only be given credit under one action; Have someone that oversees entire application
Not conducting outreach/education component required for many actions	Read the submission “What to Do” and “What to Submit” sections closely
Not completing the prerequisite action	Be sure to read the Introduction to each action and the “What to Submit” section to make sure the action does not have a prerequisite or that it has been completed.

Actions to Help You Get Ahead

Strategies to Prevent Leaving Actions on the Table

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Helpful Resources

- Sustainable Jersey Regional Hubs
  - Nine hubs around the state to help green teams build capacity through training, best practices resources and networking

Atlantic-Cape May

Bergen County

Essex County

Hunterdon Sustainability Team

Mercer County Sustainability Coalition

Middlesex County

Monmouth County

Somerset Green Leadership

Tri-County Sustainability Alliance
(Camden, Burlington, Gloucester)

Helpful Resources

- New Jersey Prevention Network
  - Smoke-Free and Tobacco-Free Public Places, Bicycle and or Pedestrian Audit/Plan, Safe Routes to School, Anti-Idling Education and Enforcement
- Transportation Management Associations
  - Can assist with Safe Routes to School, Anti-Idling Education and Enforcement, Smart Workplaces

Cross County Connection TMA	Greater Mercer TMA	Hudson TMA	HART TMA
Keep Middlesex Moving TMA	Meadowlink TMA	Ridewise TMA	TransOptions TMA

Helpful Resources

- Association of New Jersey Environmental Commissions
  - Community Education & Outreach, Diversity & Equity, Sustainable Land Use Pledge, Natural Resources, Environmental Commission and Site Plan Review
- New Jersey Bicycle and Pedestrian Resource Center
  - Adopt a Complete Streets Policy, Institute Complete Streets, and Bicycle and/or Pedestrian Plan/Audit
- Rutgers Cooperative Extension
  - Food actions, Green Roofs, Raingardens, On-Site Solar System, Water Conservation Education Program
- Watershed Associations

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Actions to Maximize Points

- Innovative Community Project
  - There are three possibilities to earn points for projects that do not fall into any other actions in the program for a potential to earn **30 points**.
- Contact town commissions and departments

Actions To Maximize Points

- Community Forestry Plan and Tree Cover Goal
  - Prerequisite for ALL Tree and Woodlands Management actions
  - Work with your Shade Tree Commission/designated tree committee
  - Key things to remember:
    - Only two submission requirements – BUT your community must **first** be participating in the NJDEP Community Forestry Program

Actions To Maximize Points

- Community Forestry Plan and Tree Cover Goal
  - Requirements:
    1. Adopt a Tree Cover Goal
       - Do not need to pay a consultant to do this, simple guidance is provided in the action
       - Tree cover goal statement must be adopted by Shade Tree Commission or group responsible for tree management
    2. NJDEP Community Forestry Annual Report of Accomplishment
       - NJDEP Community Forestry Program issues these reports and posts them on their website http://www.nj.gov/dep/parksandforests/forest/community/
       - **$3,000 grants available HERE to cover the cost of plan preparation**
- After this information is complete, you are eligible to apply for the other Tree and Woodlands Management actions
- Also FREE tree seedlings available through New Jersey Tree Recovery Campaign

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Quick Guide to Certification

Sign In/Sign up for Website Account

Pass a Resolution to Register with the Program

Assemble ***mandatory*** green team

Select actions to pursue & collect documentation

Upload Documentation & Mark Actions **Completed**

Submit Application on or before June 3

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Final Thoughts & Take Aways

- Add users to your account to assist with uploading documentation to speed up the certification process.
- Use the Start Up Actions document and Master Action Tracking Spreadsheet to develop your plan.
- Certification Cycle: It is doable! We had plenty of towns that were certified for the first time last year by the October deadline, and additional towns that continued to work on their application throughout the review and resubmittal periods up to the final deadline.

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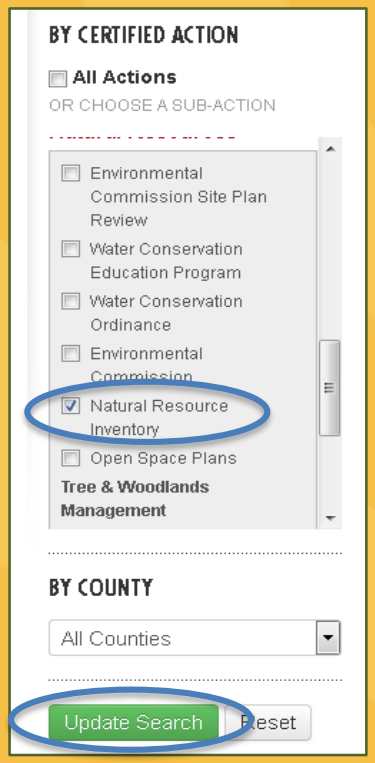
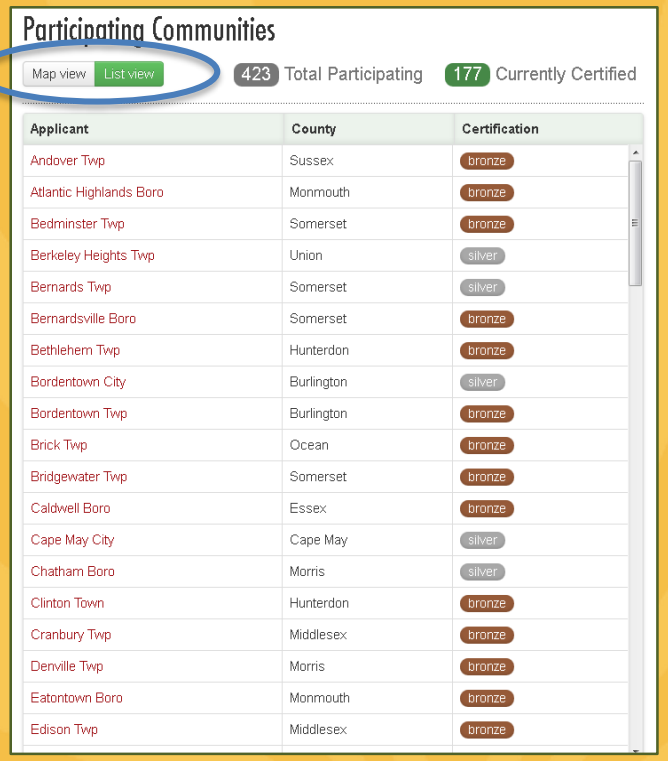
Collaborate!

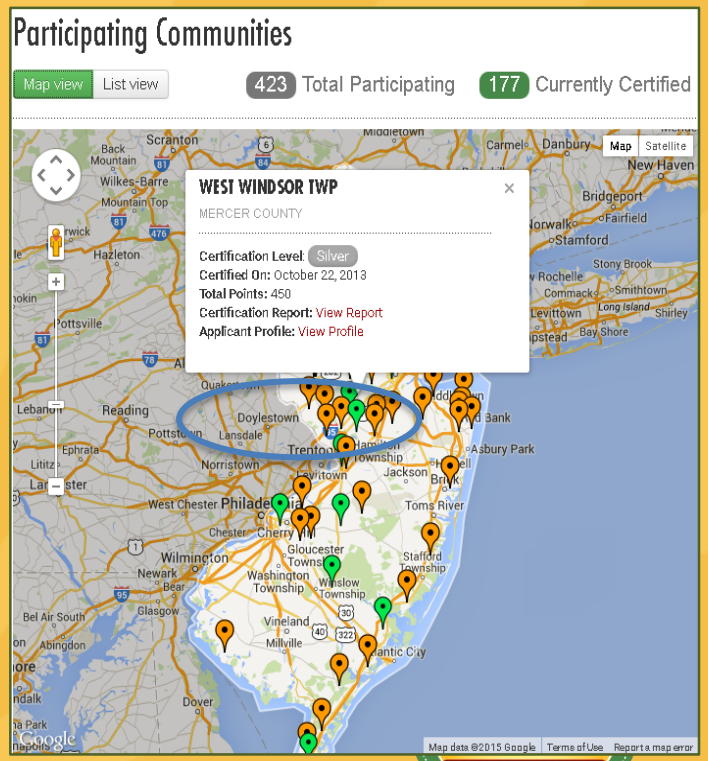
- Use the Participating Communities Map to find examples of documentation from certified towns

Search by action → View certified towns approved for that action → View certification report for example documentation





Applicant	County	Certification
Andover Twp	Sussex	bronze
Atlantic Highlands Boro	Monmouth	bronze
Bedminster Twp	Somerset	bronze
Berkeley Heights Twp	Union	silver
Bernards Twp	Somerset	silver
Bernardsville Boro	Somerset	bronze
Bethlehem Twp	Hunterdon	bronze
Bordentown City	Burlington	silver
Bordentown Twp	Burlington	bronze
Brick Twp	Ocean	bronze
Bridgewater Twp	Somerset	bronze
Caldwell Boro	Essex	bronze
Cape May City	Cape May	silver
Chatham Boro	Morris	silver
Clinton Town	Hunterdon	bronze
Cranbury Twp	Middlesex	bronze
Denville Twp	Morris	bronze
Eatontown Boro	Monmouth	bronze
Edison Twp	Middlesex	bronze



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Certification Application Deadline:

Sunday, June 3
at 11:59pm

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Sustainable Jersey Support

- Technical Support
  - **Samantha McGraw:** 609-771-2938; info@sustainablejersey.com
- View Upcoming Events & Trainings
- Join the Sustainable Jersey Mailing List
- Attend Regional Hub Meetings in Your Area
  - Contact Lauren Skowronski, skowronl@tcnj.edu or 609-771-3129
- Follow Sustainable Jersey on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and LinkedIn

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FREE Green Team Volunteer Assistance

Bonner Institute for Civic and Community Engagement at The College of New Jersey

Application Deadline: Friday, February 23

Students can support municipal green teams with a one day project that contributes to certification, such as community/rain garden maintenance, removal of invasive species, tree/shrub planting, community asset mapping in neighborhoods, etc. Projects must be within an hour drive of TCNJ. For more information, click HERE.

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Upcoming Webinar

Bronze, Silver or Gold?
Success Stories in Municipal Energy Efficiency

Wednesday, March 7, 2017; 1:00 PM - 2:00 PM
REGISTER

This webinar will discuss the benefits of energy efficiency for municipal facilities. Learn how towns have utilized New Jersey's Clean Energy Program incentives to help achieve their energy savings goals. Sustainable Jersey staff will provide guidance on moving from energy audits to efficiency upgrades, transitioning from the Inventory and Upgrade All Buildings action, and municipal leaders will provide inspiring case studies.

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Grant Funding Available

The PSEG Foundation is contributing $200,000 to support the Sustainable Jersey Grants Program for municipalities. Funding supports efforts to implement projects that help municipalities gain points needed for Sustainable Jersey certification and make progress toward a sustainable future. For more information, visit our website.

Application Deadline: Wednesday, February 28, 2018 at 11:59pm

PSEG

We make things work for you.

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