Making a Game Plan for Getting Certified

February 20, 2019

@SJ_Program  |  #DecadeofImpact
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
  – 2019 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
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
What is Sustainable Jersey?

- Program start: February 2009
- 448 (79%) NJ municipalities participating
- 89% of NJ’s population lives in these communities
- 203 municipalities certified:
  - 148 towns at bronze level
  - 55 towns at silver level
Actions: Prosperity, Planet, People

- Municipalities choose from the menu of nearly 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
Sustainable Jersey “Actions” in Action
Certification Benefits

- Save money.
- Get money.
- Gain access to tools, training and expert guidance.
- Get recognized.
- Promote your town.
- Conserve valuable resources.
- Protect the environment.

$2.9 million in sustainability projects funded!!
Moving Toward Certification
Certification Steps

#1 Pass resolution & register municipality online

#2 Form mandatory green team

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

#4 Submit documentation for each action

**Certification awarded after review and verification**
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.
Certification Requirements

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

Bronze

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

Silver

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
- 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
Priority Actions

- Climate Adaptation: Flooding Risk
- Diversity on Boards & Commissions
- Energy Tracking & Management
- Energy Efficiency for Municipal Facilities
- Fleet Inventory
- Green Business Recognition Program
- 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
  – Innovation & Demonstration Projects
  – Natural Resources
  – Operations & Maintenance
  – Waste Management

http://www.sustainablejersey.com/grants

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
2019 Program Updates
Action Updates

Community Partnership & Outreach
• Community Education & Outreach
  (more points 5 to 20!)

Energy
• Residential Energy Efficiency Outreach

Health & Wellness
• Building Healthier Communities
  (more points 5 to 25!)

Garwood Mayor’s Wellness Employee Nutrition Talk

Garwood Mayor’s Wellness Walk
Updates Still to Come

Food
• Community Garden

Land Use & Transportation
• Bike/ped audit

Natural Resources
• Community Forestry Plan & Tree Cover Goal
Applying for Certification

GET CERTIFIED
### 2019 Certification Cycle Timeline

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>June 2</td>
<td>Initial Application Deadline&lt;br&gt;• Indicate actions you plan to earn credit for by marking “Completed”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Early-July</td>
<td>First round review comments provided</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September 8**</td>
<td>Revision deadline to be eligible for recognition at the 2019 Sustainable Jersey Luncheon during the NJLM Conference</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mid-October</td>
<td>Second round review comments provided</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November 17</td>
<td>FINAL application deadline</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mid-December</td>
<td>Final decision on pending applications</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**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.
Submit September 2019

Certified October 2019
- Remain at current point level
- Resubmit November 17 for more points
  - Certified at higher point level December 2019
  - Retain same point value from October certification
- Not Certified
  - Certifed December 2019
  - Not Certified December 2019

Not Certified October 2019
- Resubmit November 17
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”
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
- Download Resolution: 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
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.
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
Variable Point Actions

- The points awarded for the action will vary based on what has been accomplished.
- For example, the BHC action allows you to earn points for having a health and wellness initiative for each population segment.
- 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

ACTION SUBMISSION: DIVERSITY ON BOARDS & COMMISSIONS

You are editing the action submission for the action "Diversity on Boards & Commissions." Learn more about this action.

Directions: Please complete this form to submit this action as part of your application. First, mark the Status as "planned" and, if it is a variable point action, indicate the Requested Points. See the action text for the action requirements associated with each point level. After you have entered the Description and Implementation and Uploaded the Supporting Documentation, click on the Save Action Submission button. Finally, when the action submission is complete and ready for review, change the status from "planned" to "completed" and resave.

- Status
  - Current action submission status: Planned
  - Planned

- Points
  - Points for this action are not variable.
  - 10

Diversity on Boards & Commissions

10 Points ★ Bronze Priority ★ Silver Priority

Who should lead and be involved in this action?

Municipal governments have many opportunities to incorporate social equity issues into local government practice and programs. This Diversity on Boards and Commissions action provides an assessment process that allows communities to begin to consider the degree of inclusivity and representation of the membership of their municipal boards and commissions. Communities should strive for board and commission membership that reflects the community profile in terms of race, religion, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, sexual orientation, age, political beliefs, physical ability, national origin, cultural identification, national identification, and family structure. This is not to say that people from one group will not do a good job representing people from another. However, diverse board membership encourages the exchange of different perspectives, facilitates innovative problem-solving, and supports social equity in communities.

Who should lead and be involved in this action?

The Mayor, with support from the leadership of the governing body, municipal staff, Green Team, board and commission members, community and both based organizations, social service organizations, and community residents, could participate in an effort to evaluate the diversity on municipal boards and commissions.

Timeframe
• 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

#2
Use Description of Implementation box to provide a summary of what was accomplished. Accomplishments should be in-sync with the action

#3
Upload documents that support the information contained in the summary

#4
Type in descriptive document titles for all uploaded files (i.e. Green Purchasing Policy or Outreach Materials)
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)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mandatory</th>
<th>1/1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Priority</td>
<td>3/12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>215/1490</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Categories</td>
<td>6/19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Actions</td>
<td>19/139</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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
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

**ACTION TOTALS**

(Completed, Approved)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mandatory</td>
<td>1/1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Priority</td>
<td>3/12</td>
</tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Actions</td>
<td>19/139</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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
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”
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pitfall</th>
<th>How to Overcome</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Action Implemented Expired/Too old</td>
<td>Review Submission Requirements; Update action as necessary.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proper documentation not submitted</td>
<td>Double check action submission requirements and documentation uploaded</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Misinterpretation of Action Goals</td>
<td>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</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seeking credit for same activity under two different actions</td>
<td>One activity may only be given credit under one action; Have someone that oversees entire application</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not conducting outreach/education component required for many actions</td>
<td>Read the submission “What to Do” and “What to Submit” sections closely</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not completing the prerequisite action</td>
<td>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.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Actions to Help You Get Ahead

Strategies to Prevent Leaving Actions on the Table
**Helpful Resources**

**Sustainable Jersey Regional Hubs**

- Ten hubs around the state to help green teams build capacity through training, best practices resources and networking

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Atlantic-Cape May</th>
<th>Middlesex County</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bergen County</td>
<td>Monmouth County</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Essex County</td>
<td>Somerset Green Leadership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hunterdon Sustainability Team</td>
<td>Tri-County Sustainability Alliance (Camden, Burlington, Gloucester)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mercer County Sustainability Coalition</td>
<td>Union County</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Helpful Resources

• New Jersey Prevention Network
  – 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, other transportation actions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cross County Connection TMA</th>
<th>Greater Mercer TMA</th>
<th>Hudson TMA</th>
<th>HART TMA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>KMM Keep Middlesex Moving TMA</td>
<td>ezride TMA</td>
<td>RIDEWISE TMA</td>
<td>TransOptions TMA</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Points</th>
<th>Approval Period</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Companion Animal Management Plan</td>
<td>Animals in the Community</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>5.5 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Climate Adaptation: Flooding Risk (Priority)</td>
<td>Emergency Management &amp; Resiliency</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>3.5 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Energy Efficiency for Municipal Facilities (Priority)</td>
<td>Energy</td>
<td>5 – 50</td>
<td>5 or 10 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Municipal On-Site Solar System</td>
<td>Energy</td>
<td>10 - 40</td>
<td>5 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Innovative Community Project 1-3</td>
<td>Innovation &amp; Demonstration Projects</td>
<td>10 - 30</td>
<td>Up to 5 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bicycle and/or Pedestrian Plan</td>
<td>Land Use &amp; Transportation</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Effective Parking Management</td>
<td>Land Use &amp; Transportation</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>5.5 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Natural Resources Inventory</td>
<td>Natural Resources</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>10 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Environmental Assessment Ordinance</td>
<td>Natural Resources</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Non-Expanding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tree Protection Ordinance</td>
<td>Natural Resources</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Non-Expanding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Water Conservation Education Program</td>
<td>Natural Resources</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>3.5 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Forestry Plan and Tree Cover Goal</td>
<td>Natural Resources</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>1.5 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Tree Hazard Inventory</td>
<td></td>
<td>10</td>
<td>5.5 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Tree Maintenance Programs</td>
<td></td>
<td>10</td>
<td>2.5 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Tree Planting Programs</td>
<td></td>
<td>10</td>
<td>3.5 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Mandated Materials Recycling</td>
<td>Waste Management</td>
<td>5 to 60</td>
<td>1.5 years</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This is a list of actions with the highest point value, approval period of 3 years or longer, and highest approval rating.
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

Reach out with questions early and often!!
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.
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

![Participating Communities Map]

**By Certified Action**
- All Actions
- OR Choose a Sub-Action:
  - Environmental Commission Site Plan Review
  - Water Conservation Education Program
  - Water Conservation Ordinance
  - Natural Resource Inventory
  - Open Space Plans
  - Tree & Woodlands Management

**By County**
- All Counties

![Participating Communities Table]

Participating Communities
- Total Participating: 423
- Currently Certified: 177

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Applicant</th>
<th>County</th>
<th>Certification</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Andover Twp</td>
<td>Sussex</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Atlantic Highlands Boro</td>
<td>Monmouth</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bedminster Twp</td>
<td>Somerset</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Berkeley Heights Twp</td>
<td>Union</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bernards Twp</td>
<td>Somerset</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bernardsville Boro</td>
<td>Somerset</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bethlehem Twp</td>
<td>Hunterdon</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bordentown City</td>
<td>Burlington</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bordentown Twp</td>
<td>Burlington</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black Twp</td>
<td>Ocean</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bridgewater Twp</td>
<td>Somerset</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caldwell Boro</td>
<td>Essex</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cape May City</td>
<td>Cape May</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chatham Boro</td>
<td>Morris</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clinton Town</td>
<td>Hunterdon</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cranbury Twp</td>
<td>Middlesex</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Denville Twp</td>
<td>Morris</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Easton Twp</td>
<td>Morris</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Edison Twp</td>
<td>Middlesex</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Participating Communities**
- Mercer County

![West Windsor Twp Map]

West Windsor Twp
- Mercer County
- Certification Level: Silver
- Certified on: October 22, 2013
- Total Points: 450
- Certification Report: View Report
- Applicant Profile: View Profile

![Update Search]

Update Search
- Reset
Certification Application
Deadline:
Sunday, June 2 at 11:59pm
Sustainable Jersey Support

• Technical Support
  – Maureen Jones: 609-771-2938; info@sustainablejersey.com

• View Upcoming Events & Trainings

• 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
Upcoming Webinars

Foundations for Using Technology Effectively in Your Town
• Wednesday, February 27, 2019 - 1:00 PM - 2:00 PM REGISTER

Green Team 2.0: Building Your Capacity & Promoting Your Team
• Wednesday, March 6, 2019, 1:00pm – 2:00pm REGISTER
• Wednesday, March 6, 2019, 7:00pm – 8:00pm REGISTER