



Sustainable Jersey Certification Report

This is the Sustainable Jersey Certification Report of Bernards Twp, a Sustainable Jersey bronze certified applicant.

Bernards Twp was certified on October 06, 2022 with 245 points. Listed below is information regarding Bernards Twp's Sustainable Jersey efforts and materials associated with the applicant's certified actions.

Contact Information

The designated Sustainable Jersey contact for Bernards Twp is:

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Actions Implemented

Each approved action and supporting documentation for which Bernards Twp was approved for in 2022 appears below. Note: Standards for the actions below may have changed and the documentation listed may no longer satisfy requirements for that action. Additionally, points associated with actions prior to 2013 certifications may not be accurate.

Community Partnership & Outreach

Green Team

10 Points

Bronze Required

Program Summary: Attached is a copy of the 2007 Resolution #070292 "Appointments to the Green Team Advisory Committee" and January 4, 2022 Township Committee Reorganization meeting "Appointing the Members to the Green Team Advisory Committee for 2022." The Bernards Township's Green Team works in conjunction with all municipal departments on an

ongoing basis to review and discuss projects implemented, underway and proposed. The past few years, the town has focused on electric vehicles and charging stations. In March 2020 the township purchased 2 fully electric Chevy Bolt vehicles. The township has installed 2 CHARGEPOINT Level II/Dual Port Charging Stations at Townhall and the Public Works buildings. A third charging station located in the downtown municipal parking lot is underway. Please see attached list detailing many of Bernards Townships Green Team accomplishments, since its formation.

PDF: [FILE 1-ESTABLISHING A GREEN TEAM ADVISORY COMMITTEE RESOLUTION 2007.PDF](#)

PDF: [FILE 2- WEBSITE.PDF](#)

PDF: [FILE 3-REORG MEETING.PDF](#)

PDF: [FILE 4-GREEN TEAM ACTIVITIES-2022.PDF](#)

Energy

Municipal Onsite Solar System

30 Points

Program Summary: Bernards Townships Sewerage Authority completed the construction of a 1.1 Megawatt Solar Photovoltaic Field at its Sewerage Authority Treatment Plant on Martinsville Road in June 2011. The project included the installation of over 4,700 solar panels on ground mounts, the drying bed roof and two steel canopies that extend over the lagoons. In 2010 the Sewerage Authority consumed 2,014,866 kwh of electricity. Since the installation of the on-site solar system the Sewerage Authority has displaced far greater than 30% of electricity at the Treatment Plant: 2012 - 33.7% displaced 2015 - 44.8% displaced 2017 - 40.5% displaced 2018 - 39.0% displaced Bernards Township is requesting 30 points for this action, since greater than 30% of electricity is displaced. This project not only reduced the towns operating costs but is an additional ecologically sensible and progressive initiative in the drive toward energy independence.

PDF: [BTSA SOLAR ANNOUNCEMENT](#)

PDF: [BTSA SOLAR PROJECT PICTURES](#)

PDF: [SOLAR PRODUCTION 2017](#)

PDF: [SOLAR PRODUCTION 2018](#)

PDF: [GRAPH OF MWH DISPLACEMENT](#)

Purchase Alternative Fuel Vehicles

10 Points

Program Summary: The Township of Bernards purchased two fully electric Chevrolet Bolt vehicles in March 2020. These vehicles are available for all departments to use and can be charged at the Townhall or DPW/Engineering charging stations. Copies of the resolution, purchase order and registration are attached.

PDF: [FILE 1- REGISTRATION.PDF](#)

PDF: [FILE 2- RESOLUTION-CHEVY BOLTS.PDF](#)

PDF: [FILE 3-EDMUNDS PURCHASE ORDER CHEVY BOLTS.PDF](#)

PDF: [FILE 4- PICTURE #422.PDF](#)

Public Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure

15 Points

Program Summary: The first of two Level 2 Dual Port Charging Stations was installed in 2019 at the Department of Public Works building and the second was installed at the Townhall building in 2020. The charging stations in part were funded by “It Pay\$ to Plug In Grant” and the “Clean Fleet Electric Vehicle Incentive Program”. A third public Level 2 Dual-Port Charging Station is underway at the downtown municipal parking lot and will be operational later this year. All charging stations are available to the public and are listed on the CHARGEPOINT website. The fees are \$1.50 an hour for the 1st 3 hours and \$2.00 an hour after that.

PDF: [FILE 1- RESOLUTIONS.PDF](#)

PDF: [FILE 2- WEBSITE- CHARGEPOINT.PDF](#)

PDF: [FILE 3- PICTURES.PDF](#)

PDF: [FILE 4- RESOLUTION-FEES.PDF](#)

PDF: [FILE 5- MEMO.PDF](#)

Natural Resources

Natural Resource Inventory

20 Points

 Bronze Priority  Silver Priority

Program Summary: The Bernards Township NRI has just recently been updated. The update has been approved by the Environmental Commission and incorporated into the Bernards Township Master Plan, and utilized in planning and policy making decisions. This revision was in 2014, and the township is working within the framework of updating the NRI at least every 6 years. As per the Environmental Commission, there were no substantive changes to the NRI. Be it noted, some open space acreage was formalized as designated protected open space.

PDF: [NRI DOCUMENT](#)

PDF: [MASTER PLAN RESOLUTION](#)

PDF: [NRI UPDATE RESOLUTION](#)

Environmental Commission

10 Points

Program Summary: Bernards Townships Environmental Commission is responsible for ensuring

that environmental issues in Bernards Township are given the right priority to protect and preserve the natural resources of the town and surrounding areas including land, water, air, and bios (flora and fauna). The Environmental Commission accomplishes its mission through: • Taking proactive stances on local environmental matters and strengthening the local planning process • Coordinating rational, balanced reviews of development applications for the appropriate township bodies • Increasing public awareness and understanding of local and regional environmental issues • Keeping abreast of, and involvement in, as appropriate, issues in surrounding areas and communities • Staying up to date on ordinances and regulations for Bernards Township with training sessions 2021 accomplishments include: Development Application Reviews- provided commentary to the Planning Board, Board of Adjustment and Township Committee regarding environmental impacts and issues; Master Plan Review-reviewed the Townships Conservation and Open Space Plan Element and the Green Buildings and Environmental Sustainability Plan Element; Tree Protection-worked cooperatively on reviewing 15 applications to assess tree removal with the Shade Tree Commission and Engineering Department; Public Outreach-posted over 15 environmentally themed, educational/awareness pieces; Advisory & Volunteerism-provided guidance to high school students regarding green efforts, helped promote the Girl Scouts “Caps for a Cure”, Parks and Recreation TREX challenge and Ridge girls basketball fundraiser for Christmas tree recycling; Trips/Events-launched the Reusable Bag Challenge to all students in grades K-8, visited the Colgate Recycling Plant and organized a free Pumpkin Squash event.

PDF: [FILE 1-ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION ORDINANCE.PDF](#)

PDF: [FILE 2-ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION-WEBSITE.PDF](#)

PDF: [FILE 3-EC ANNUAL REPORT.PDF](#)

Easement Inventory & Outreach

10 Points

Program Summary: Bernards Township has established a comprehensive Easement Inventory Program with a complete database compiled and mapped in GIS. In addition, a public education and outreach program is in place with outreach documentation provided. The Township Engineer, Planner, Zoning Officer, Surveyor and GIS Specialist have worked together to develop the Conservation Easement Inventory, Inspection and Stewardship Program. Conservation Easements are required by the Township Land Development Ordinance, Planning Board and/or Zoning Board of Adjustment to protect wetland, wetland transition, stream buffer, steep slope and woodland areas. The intent of this program is to limit soil loss, erosion, flood damage and degradation of surface water while at the same time buffer the effects of pollutants and preserve wildlife habitats and scenic views. Conservation Easements are granted to Bernards Township during the Planning/Zoning Board application process or during the construction permit process. The easement inventory is constantly expanding as new easements are added. Each individual easement is inspected by the Zoning Officer once every two years. Baseline pictures are taken during the initial inspection and uploaded into our GIS database. The pictures will be used for comparison with future site conditions. Violations discovered during the inspection process will be addressed immediately. An inspection report is completed for each property. All property owners receive educational correspondence, at least every two years, explaining the restrictions associated with, and the benefits of, the conservation easements.

PDF: [FILE 1-CONSERVATION EASEMENTS LETTER & MATERIALS.PDF](#)

PDF: [FILE 2-INVENTORY OF CONSERVATION EASEMENTS-2022.PDF](#)

PDF: [FILE 3-CONSERVATION EASEMENTS-MAP.PDF](#)

Clustering Ordinance

10 Points

Program Summary: Bernards Township has adopted a Clustering ordinance to control sprawl, conserve resources and habitat and promote quality of life in the township. In addition, the township has passed other ordinances to regulate development and protect natural resources including a Natural Resource Conservation Development ordinance and a Land Development ordinance.

PDF: [CLUSTERING](#)

PDF: [NATURAL RESOURCE CONSERVATION](#)

PDF: [LAND DEVELOPMENT](#)

Environmental Assessment Ordinance

10 Points

Program Summary: Bernards Township has established an Environmental Assessment ordinance. In addition, to better protect the environment and guide development in a sustainable manner, the township has also put in place a Natural Resource Conservation Development Ordinance and a Land Development Ordinance.

PDF: [ENVL ASSESSMENT ORD](#)

PDF: [NAT RESOURCE CONSERVATION ORD](#)

PDF: [LAND DEVELOPMENT ORD](#)

Community Forestry Management Plan & NJUCF Accreditation

20 Points

Program Summary: The Bernards Township Shade Tree Commission has been very active working to protect and promote tree and woodland resources in our community. A New Jersey Bureau of Forestry approved Community Forestry Plan for 2018-2022 is in place with the Certificate of Approval from the State provided. The 2021 Shade Tree Annual Report and 2021 Accreditation Status Report is attached.

PDF: [FILE 1-COMMUNITY FORESTRY PLAN 2018-2022.PDF](#)

PDF: [FILE 2-CERTIFICATE- COMMUNITY FORESTRY PLAN 2018-2022.PDF](#)

PDF: [FILE 3-STC RESOLUTION & ACCOMPLISHMENTS.PDF](#)

PDF: [FILE 4-NJUCF ACCREDITATION STATUS.PDF](#)

Tree Maintenance Programs

10 Points

Program Summary: Bernards Township is dedicated to protecting and maintaining its trees and woodlands in a healthy condition. The Public Works Department works in conjunction with the Shade Tree Commission and actively monitors and maintains trees on all Township properties. The town has a contract with Harmony Tree Care an outside service to help with tree maintenance. All tree maintenance activities are conducted as outlined in the Community Forestry Management Plan.

PDF: [FILE 1-STC BUDGET.PDF](#)

PDF: [FILE 2-TREE REMOVAL LOG 2021.PDF](#)

PDF: [FILE 3-TREE MAINTENANCE RESOLUTION.PDF](#)

PDF: [FILE 4-EDMUNDS PO DETAIL.PDF](#)

Tree Planting *New 2026*

10 Points

Program Summary: The Bernards Township Shade Tree Commission has an active tree planting program as part of its Community Forestry Management Plan. In the past, the tree planting program was originally designed to replace dead trees, fill open spaces located by the Shade Tree Commission, meet the requests of residents and add species diversity to Township parks, streets and other facilities. Beginning in 2018, the planting policy has focused on municipal properties, primarily the parks. Developers are required to support our planting program by replacing trees lost to development according to a formula. For example, builders must plant 3-3 ½ inch caliper trees chosen from the Shade Tree Commission approved planting list for all new developments. The number of replacement trees is based on the girth of the tree lost to development. Arbor Day and memorial plantings have also been and will remain an integral part of the tree planting program. Bernards recognizes the need for diversity and stability in the aging tree population and intends to integrate young trees into areas with aging and declining tree population. Implementation of this program has helped beautify the town and also increased the diversity of species and age of the trees in Bernards Township. The commission is also engaged in public education and awareness of the value and importance of trees in our community. Information on tree planting including tree specifications and budget is provided. The township has also initiated a 5 in Five tree planting program, with online portal encouraging residents to become actively involved in the initiative. The Township Committee has passed an Arbor Day 2019 resolution and is committed to tree protection in the community. Bernards Township has been recognized as a Tree City USA for 2018 by the Arbor Day Foundation.

PDF: [SHADE TREE COMMISSION WEBPAGE](#)

PDF: [ARBOR DAY](#)

PDF: [TREE CITY USA](#)

PDF: [EDMUNDS](#)

PDF: [BUDGET](#)

Public Information & Engagement

Improve Public Engagement in Municipal Government

15 Points

Program Summary: Bernards Township is a leader in providing key information on the website for the public. The Township Committee webpage lists the meetings dates/times for the full year. Meetings are advertised on the main page of the website. Agendas are posted by noon on Friday prior to the following Tuesday meeting. All resolutions, ordinances and reports are hyper-linked to the agenda. Residents are notified via Facebook and Twitter when an agenda is posted. Meetings are streamed live on the website, and cable tv, and video clips are available following the meetings. Township Committee e-mail addresses are listed on the website. Meetings rules of order are posted on the Township website and residents can speak at the public comment portion of the meeting. A Meet the Mayor series was held monthly in 2021 and focused on educational and cultural programs to foster unity and develop a sense of community. Bernards Township established the Utility Advisory Task Force in 2020 to assess the level of communication and service from the utility companies and identify areas of concern and in need of improvement, suggest ways to collect and report chronic outages and disruptions and facilitate/coordinate residents feedback to the BPU. Final report was sent to the Township Committee and one of the positive outcomes of this Task Force was that Altice/Optimum agreed to lay optic cables in The Hills section of Bernards Township to improve internet speeds. This is a critical improvement for many residents as they work from home and students need technology for educational purposes.

PDF: [FILE 1-SUBMISSION CHECKLIST-IMPROVE PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT.PDF](#)

Online Municipal Public Service Systems

15 Points

Program Summary: Bernards Township is very pro-active in providing essential information regarding public services on the municipal website and is a leader in providing digitized information to the public as well. The re-design of the website in 2020 provides information in a more efficient way. Every department webpage has a consistent format and provides contact information, hours of operation, documents, and pertinent information for that department. With a click on On-Line Services, the public can: • Pay taxes/sewer bills • Apply for commuter parking • Register for a parks & recreation program • Search property records • Search construction records • Complete a permit application • Search ordinances/resolutions • Submit a service request • Submit an OPRA request SIGN ME UP allows the public to receive emergency & non-emergency notifications via e-mail, voice mail, text messages or a variety of social media platforms. The notifications include the following: emergency information, press releases and special announcements, election information, health alerts, newsletters, screening and programs, animal control notices, tax and sewer payments and assessment information, public works alerts, roadwork and construction notices, parking permit reminders, bid opportunities and employment opportunities. The Parks & Recreation Department uses Constant Contact to send out weekly information on programs, events and services as well as notifications on field closures. The Library utilizes Library Aware to send information on programs & services, interest group meetings & reading suggestions. Bernards Township is requesting the additional 5 points for the ability of applicants to apply for and check the status of construction and building permits via the SDL portal. The township also utilizes the on-line tracking system in the SDL portal for the public to submit a service request/report an issue.

PDF: [FILE 1-ONLINE MUNICIPAL PUBLIC SERVICE SYSTEMS-CHECKLIST.PDF](#)

Digitizing Public Information

10 Points

Program Summary: Bernards Townships website was re-designed in 2020 to better serve the public. The re-design helped to promote a consistent format for all departments, committees & boards and to provide a concise platform for the dissemination of information. The impact for the community is to strive for transparency, provide important information to engage the public and create a partnership between the Township and its community. All public meeting dates, times & locations are listed on the website on the appropriate webpage. Township Committee agendas and minutes include all resolution, ordinances, contracts, agreements, etc. for the public to view. Boards & Committees lists all the members names and term expiration dates. Non-emergency information such as recycling, snow removal, permit applications, inspections, fire safety, etc. are listed on the website under the appropriate department. There is also a link at the top of the main page titled RESIDENTS which contains school district information, voting information, recycling information, utilities information, etc. Interested bidders can sign up for bid notifications on the SIGN ME UP! webpage and then view results under the Purchasing Department. OPRA requests can be submitted online. Digitizing construction permits, property records, sales & realty transfers, etc. has significantly reduced OPRA requests since the information is available online. Digitizing public information records has resulted in increased efficiencies and cost savings for Bernards Township.

PDF: [FILE 1-DIGITIZING PUBLIC INFORMATION- CHECKLIST.PDF](#)

Sustainability & Climate Planning

Municipal Carbon Footprint

10 Points

 Bronze Priority  Silver Priority

Program Summary: Bernards Township has calculated the 2018 Carbon Footprint and compared the results to 2015 and 2010. The calculations include every municipal facility, including the Sewerage Authority, all street lights, traffic signals and fleet data. The results indicate a significant overall reduction in Total Emissions (Metric CO₂e) of 15% from base year 2010 and a slight increase over 2015 of 6%. One of the key drivers over 2010 is a 39% reduction in KWH at the Sewerage Authority Plant, since the installation of a 1.1 megawatt solar field in June 2011. In addition, the installation of Solar Tubes in 2012 and Solar Panels in September 2013 at the Department of Public Works and Engineering Building have reduced the footprint. The installation of efficient lighting and HVAC measures have contributed to the reduced carbon footprint at all of the municipal buildings since 2010. The slight increase over 2015 reflects colder weather patterns in 2018 reflecting increased gas usage. Street light reductions reflect the benefit of replacing with LED fixtures. Higher mileage is due to increased operations due to additional storms, public safety and daily operations. Bernards Township continues to replace low MPG vehicles with higher MPG units, downgrade vehicle size when appropriate and practice proactive vehicle maintenance to ensure efficiency.

PDF: [CARBON FOOTPRINT 2018](#)

PDF: [CARBON FOOTPRINT 2015](#)

PDF: [CARBON FOOTPRINT 2010](#)

Waste Management

Prescription Drug Safety & Disposal

10 Points

 Bronze Priority  Silver Priority

Program Summary: Bernards Township is home to one of eight permanent prescription drug drop-off locations in Somerset County. Information regarding Bernards Township drop-off is located on Bernards Township’s website on the Police Department webpage and is also promoted on the Somerset County website. The drop-off box is in the lobby of the Bernards Township Police Department, 1 Collyer Lane, Basking Ridge, NJ. Hours of operation are 7:00am – 4:30pm. Residents can drop off unwanted/expired prescription drugs or over the counter medication Monday through Friday. The drugs are transported on a quarterly basis to the Somerset County Prosecutors Office, where the DEA sets up a collection point on specific days for disposition. Over 440 lbs. of prescription drugs were collected in 2021. In addition to the permanent drop-off location at the Police Department, Bernards Township participated in the National Prescription Drug Tack Back Days events on April 24, 2021 and October 23, 2021. These events were advertised on the website (screenshots available in File 3) and promoted on Facebook and Instagram. The October 23rd event was co-sponsored by the Bernards Township Health Department “Community in Crisis” program. Residents are always reminded at the drop-off events that the permanent location is always available to dispose of prescription drugs safely.

PDF: [FILE 1-WEBSITE.PDF](#)

PDF: [FILE 2- FLYER- PHOTO.PDF](#)

PDF: [FILE 3-DRUG TAKE BACK EVENTS.PDF](#)

PDF: [FILE 4-COLLECTION DATA 2021.PDF](#)

PDF: [FILE 5-SC PERMANENT DROP OFF LOCATIONS.PDF](#)

Recycling Depot

10 Points

Program Summary: Bernards Township has developed an extensive recycling program supervised by the Public Works Director and the Certified Recycling Coordinator. In addition to recycling in municipal buildings, the program includes a recycling center, recycling at the public works facility and in municipal parks, as well as several downtown locations. The website contains information regarding materials collected, hours of operation, etc. at the Pill Hill Recycling Center. The Department of Public Works Staff is used to facilitate the successful operation and management of the recycling center. The recycling center provides residents a valuable resource, enabling them to recycle items in an efficient and effective manner.

PDF: [FILE 1-PILL HILL REPORT 2021.PDF](#)

PDF: [FILE 2-WEBSITE.PDF](#)

PDF: [FILE 3- PILL HILL SIGNAGE & CONTAINERS.PDF](#)

PDF: [FILE 4-WASTE OIL.PDF](#)

