



## Green Business Recognition Program

10 Points

20 Points

Priority for all certification levels

### Updated February 2018

Community efforts toward sustainability cannot be successful without the active engagement of the private sector. A Green Business Recognition Program provides marketing and promotional support to encourage local businesses to implement sustainable practices. Companies can adopt environmentally friendly strategies to increase energy efficiency, conserve resources, reduce waste, and prevent pollution. Beyond ecological impacts, recognition programs can also encompass social responsibility and commitments to the local economy. A simple Green Business Recognition Program might acknowledge companies that implement green practices while a more comprehensive certification effort could outline a specific set of sustainable business practices and conduct inspections to verify implementation.

There are two options for municipalities to earn points for this action, depending on how the recognition program is implemented. In both cases, the Green Business Recognition Program must be active at the time of submission. The options include.

**Option 1:** Municipalities can earn 10 points for establishing a Green Business Recognition Program for local companies that includes criteria for participation and a marketing strategy to recognize participants. The program may be structured as a general program for all businesses or targeted at a specific business sector (i.e. restaurants, hotels, marina's or other sectors). To be eligible for points, the municipality must serve as a partner in project development and implementation. The program may be administered directly by the municipality or through other organizations, such as the local Chamber of Commerce or Main Street program. A minimum two businesses must be participating in the Green Business Recognition Program.

**Option 2:** Municipalities can earn 20 points if the Green Business Recognition Program incorporates the criteria established by the [New Jersey Sustainable Business Registry Program \(NJSBR\)](#), and includes participation in the NJSBR (which is free) as a mandatory element in their Recognition Programs. The NJSBR was developed by the New Jersey Small Business Development Centers in partnership with the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection. It is an online registry where businesses can promote their sustainability initiatives and can receive tips and resources to help them grow greener. Sustainable Jersey communities that have decided to adopt the NJSBR are eligible to receive a [community page](#) on the website, listing all local registry participants. A minimum three businesses must be participating in the Green Business Recognition Program and the NJSBR.

A Green Business Recognition Program would complement the initiatives found in the toolkit for the Green Jobs and Economic Development action. Other related actions include [Action Plans](#) or [Climate Action Plan](#). The goals and actions outlined in these plans provide guidance for the criteria to be included in a Green Business Recognition Program.

### Why is it important?

The participation of the business community is essential for achieving sustainability. Voluntary recognition programs build partnerships with private companies to reduce environmental impacts, boost economic efficiency, and improve quality of life.

**Any business can become greener.** While communities can work to attract new “green sector” businesses, existing companies should not be overlooked. A wide variety of sustainable practices can be implemented by conventional businesses with significant room for improvement in almost every industry.

**Many businesses are already moving toward greener practices.** Across New Jersey, businesses are voluntarily implementing strategies to reduce energy consumption and waste, use sustainable materials, offer greener products, and contribute to the local community. A Green Business Recognition Program publicly acknowledges companies that are leading the way in sustainable business practices, and serves as a challenge for further action.

**A Green Business Recognition Program engages the private sector.** Social and environmental issues are pressing, and businesses have an important role to play. New Jersey businesses are on the front-line of current and future climate change impacts. Rising sea levels and extreme weather events like Hurricane Sandy demonstrate the economic risks associated with inaction. Business owners have an essential role in mitigating climate change impacts in their own businesses to help New Jersey become stronger overall.

**Green business practices can save money.** Energy efficiency and other sustainable practices frequently offer long term cost savings, allowing businesses to contribute to the community while becoming more economically competitive. Municipalities that support local businesses in becoming more efficient, through local marketing or financial or tax incentives are likely to have a stronger, more resilient local economy.

**Many consumers demand green products and services.** Consumers are seeking out sustainable products and are often willing to pay a premium for these goods and services. Businesses that become identified as green businesses or offer green products and services increasingly enjoy marketing advantages.

**A Green Business Recognition Program raises the community's green profile.** By showcasing private sector commitments to sustainability, a recognition program helps to promote the municipality as a green community. Communities with a green profile and high demand for sustainable products and services are better able to compete for new green jobs and sustainable industries.

**Business actions ultimately influence public policy.** Businesses and social enterprises can be change agents for healthy growth and revitalization. They can influence government to remove obstacles, create incentives, and provide support to create an economic environment that is restorative, equitable, and sustainable.

## **Who should lead and be involved with this action?**

The green team should work with the Environmental Commission, Economic Development Commission, local Chamber of Commerce and if applicable the Main Street Program to establish a Green Business Recognition Program.

## **Timeframe**

Depending on the approach a municipality takes in implementing the program, it may require between 4 and 6 months to create a Green Business Recognition Program.

## **Project costs and resource needs**

Costs vary depending on the scope of the project and the size of the community. Costs will include staff time and program materials. Active volunteers or 10-25% of a full-time staff person would be needed to launch a basic program.

## **What to do, and how to do it ("How to")**

This section provides guidance and recommendations for implementing the action. A municipality does not need to follow this guidance exactly as long as it meets the requirements for earning points for this action.

### **Step 1: Assemble Project Committee**

The Green Team should bring together representatives from the Environmental Commission, Economic Development Commission, and local Chamber of Commerce to scope the project. Participation may be sought from other interested parties, such as environmental groups, nonprofit organizations, trade associations, and labor unions. Collaboration with other municipalities to create a regional recognition program may be advantageous.

### **Step 2: Establish Participation Criteria, Support Mechanisms, and Incentives**

The committee should review the criteria of the NJSBR and determine if it wants to develop its own program

or leverage the NJSBR.

For Option 1, the scope of participation may range from a simple green business pledge to a more comprehensive program that includes regular inspections to verify the use of required practices. Compared to green pledges or self-reporting, a stricter program would offer greater credibility and stronger actions toward sustainability, but would require additional resources for inspections and might attract fewer participating businesses. The project committee should balance these considerations to determine specific criteria for participation and methods of verification. A time period for recognition should be determined so renewal is required annually or on another fixed schedule.

Municipalities should strongly consider utilizing the [New Jersey Sustainable Business Registry Program](#) (NJSBR) as the foundation for their program. The NJSBR has flexible criteria that can be adapted to municipal priorities. NJSBR membership requires businesses to have implemented five sustainable actions, and to report on one related cost savings and one related measurable benefit. Since the NJSBR is not prescriptive in nature, communities can dictate which actions they would require businesses to implement to be recognized as a local Green Business, and these actions could simultaneously be reported to the NJSBR for membership. Additionally, the NJSBR offers a sustainability business seal and requires renewal every two years. Sustainable Jersey communities that adopt the Registry as their criteria are eligible to receive a [community webpage](#) featuring local member businesses. (refer to *Step 3: Develop a Marketing Strategy* for more information). Adopting the NJSBR as your local recognition program criteria, allows green teams to focus on outreach and marketing local green businesses, rather than investing resources in creating a recognition program from scratch.

In crafting the participation criteria, the project committee could also solicit citizen participation along with input from the business community and non-profit sector. If the municipality has undertaken a Community Sustainability Plan or a Climate Action Plan, the Green Business Recognition Program should be designed to reflect the goals and actions identified in the planning process. Criteria for business participation could be formatted under the same topic areas as outlined in the plan. If indicators and targets for community sustainability have been established, the Green Business Recognition criteria should specify the business actions that are relevant to each target. Approaches to recognition criteria include:

**Sector-specific criteria:** Participant requirements are tailored to different types of businesses like “green hotels” or “green landscapers.” This approach allows the program to target sector-specific business practices that have the largest impacts on sustainability. An “other” type may be provided for businesses that do not fall into identified industry types. Examples include the following:

- [River-Friendly Certification](#): The free, voluntary and self-paced River Friendly Certification program for businesses, golf courses and farms assists in identifying areas for improvement to help protect our water resources.
- [NJ DEP’s Clean Marina Program](#): The program encourages marina owners, yacht clubs, boatyards and boaters to adopt practices that help prevent adverse impacts to water quality, sensitive habitats and living resources in proximity to marinas.
- [The Green Restaurant Certification Standards](#) educate restaurateurs about cost effective measures to lower their environmental impacts through practical and quantifiable changes. This program is being utilized by the [Meadowlands Green Restaurant Initiative](#).

**Categories of sustainability:** Participants can apply for recognition in sustainability categories like “energy efficiency,” “water conservation” or “pollution prevention.” A “general” category may also be included. Businesses would be issued separate decals or certificates for each category achieved.

**Recognition tiers:** Participants receive recognition based on different levels of commitment. Lower tiers might provide faster entry to the program with easier actions or simple pledges to “go green.” Higher tiers might require fulfillment of more comprehensive criteria with verification or inspections.

**Criteria increase over time:** Stricter requirements may be imposed with each period of renewal. For example, the first year may simply require pledges to implement green practices, but subsequent years of recognition might require proof of progress toward pledged actions or fulfillment of new criteria.

**One-size-fits-all:** General “green” practices are recognized with criteria including actions across categories of sustainability. Participants are required to fulfill (or pledge to fulfill) either a fixed set of actions or a certain number of actions selected from an action menu.

A list of sample Green Business Recognition criteria is provided below. Certain criteria may be more effective if the required actions are quantified. For example, the committee might want to specify “purchase at least ten recycled products” or “50% of employees commute by walking, biking, transit, carpools, or vanpools.”

Criteria used by existing Green Business Recognition Programs can be reviewed through the case study links in the “Resources” section.

### **Waste Management**

- Reduce waste generated.
- Reduce product packaging.
- Reduce paper use.
- Increase recycling.
- Purchase recycled materials.
- Manufacture or sell recycled products.
- Compost food scraps and yard waste.

### **Energy Use**

- Purchase electricity generated from renewable sources.
- Invest in on-site solar or wind energy.
- Install a geothermal heating and cooling system.
- Conduct an energy audit.
- Install energy efficient light bulbs and appliances.
- Earn the ENERGY STAR for a commercial or industrial facility.
- Take advantage of [New Jersey’s Clean Energy Program](#); which offers incentives for energy audits and efficiency upgrades.

### **Water Conservation**

- Install low flow toilets and aerators for faucets and shower heads.
- Use native, drought tolerant plants to reduce landscape watering.
- Serve drinking water only by request.
- Recycle grey water.

### **Green Building and Landscaping**

- Install a green roof.
- Implement sustainable landscaping practices.
- Construct a rain garden.
- Use no or low Volatile Organic Compounds (VOC) paints and sustainable building materials.
- Achieve Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) certification or other green building standards for a commercial or industrial facility.

### **Transportation**

- Outline a trip reduction strategy.
- Facilitate employee participation in carpools or vanpools.
- Subsidize public transit for employees.
- Offer bicycle parking, lockers, and showers.
- Purchase hybrid or fuel-efficient vehicles.
- Offer telecommuting or compressed work weeks.
- Install electric vehicle charging stations for employees; apply for the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection [“It Pays to Plug In”](#) Grants to offset the cost of charging equipment.

### **Pollution Reduction**

- Eliminate the use of toxic chemicals in production processes.
- Use green cleaning supplies.
- Purchase green products.
- Produce or sell environmentally friendly items.

### **Social Responsibility**

- Offer employee welfare and benefit programs.
- Ensure equitable hiring practices.

- Pay living wages.
- Offer affordable housing.
- Sell healthy foods.
- Participate in corporate philanthropy.
- Allow employees on-the-clock participation in community service.

### **Commitment to Local Economy**

- Purchase products from local suppliers.
- Offer job training or apprenticeships for local residents.
- Hire workers from local colleges and training programs.
- Mentor local entrepreneurs and new businesses.

### **Goals and Reporting**

- Complete a sustainability self-assessment.
- Establish quantifiable goals for improvement.
- Submit an annual report of green practices implemented.

### **Support Mechanisms and Incentives**

An effective program will not only lay out criteria for green businesses, but provide informational resources and technical support to assist businesses in meeting these criteria. The program may also extend financial or regulatory incentives to participating companies. The project committee should determine what support mechanisms and incentives will be used to complement the recognition program.

Support mechanisms might include:

- Local green business website with links to online resources.
- Green business brochures or handbooks that include “how-to” guides for sustainable practices, a directory of relevant local resources, and an outline of state and federal financial incentives for green initiatives.
- Green business resource center housed in a municipal facility or hosted by a local non-profit.
- Consultations and technical support available from municipal staff in specific areas such as energy efficiency, waste management, landscaping, green and local purchasing, etc.
- Consultations and technical support available from Chamber of Commerce or other local organizations with relevant expertise.
- Demonstration sites that showcase environmental technologies (see Sustainable Jersey toolkits for Solar Energy, Wind Energy, Geothermal, Green Roofs, Rain Gardens, and other “Demonstration Projects”).

Financial and regulatory incentives might include:

- Grants to green businesses.
- Loans for green businesses.
- Tax incentives for green businesses.
- Streamlined permitting.
- Less frequent regulatory inspections.
- Flexibility in meeting environmental regulations.

Consulting offered to businesses may include information on innovative financing strategies and may aid in obtaining additional incentives available from state and federal agencies.

### **Step 3: Develop a Marketing Strategy**

The recognition program will need an official name and logo. Depending on the scope of the project and available resources, the project committee may choose to hire marketing or design consultants to assist with program strategy and preparation of materials. A marketing strategy should address the following questions:

- What is the ongoing project timeline?
- How often will green business applications be accepted?
- Will recognition be announced once per year or will participating businesses be recognized

throughout the year?

- When will renewals be required?
- When will directories be updated?
- A schedule for press conferences, press releases and social media posts may also be outlined.

**What materials will be provided to recognized businesses?** Programs typically offer window decals to participating green businesses along with printed certificates. These should be dated and reissued after each period of renewal. For municipalities choosing to implement Option 2, please note that the NJSBR provides window decals to member businesses.

**What print publications will be created?** These may include a Green Business Directory, business guides, application form, and consumer brochures. Information about the program may also be incorporated into existing municipal publications, such as a community newsletter.

**What web publications will be created?** The program should have a webpage with electronic versions of print materials. Online resources might include additional information for businesses, such as detailed how-to guides and links to other sources related to sustainable business practices.

**Will you provide an online Green Business Directory?** An online version of the Green Business Directory should outline participation criteria and allow consumers to search for local green businesses. Detailed information about the green actions taken by each company may also be provided. For Municipalities choosing to implement Option 2, the NJSBR will provide a community specific Green Business Directory webpage. The project committee must request the development of the community webpage and will be required to provide the images and content hosted on the webpage, and to review and approve the webpage prior to publication.

**What types of advertising will be used?** Advertising will be needed to attract businesses to enter the program and to make consumers aware of the efforts of green businesses. The recognition program may purchase web, print, radio, and possibly television advertising. Consider strategizing how social media can be utilized to promote your program and member businesses.

#### **Step 4: Use Social Media**

Promoting your program with social media will greatly increase your programs' visibility and engagement with a broad audience of residents. With increased visibility, your program will attract greater participation from local business owners and serve to promote those businesses that are already participating. At a minimum, the project committee should consider the following:

**Does your municipality have dedicated social media accounts?** Accounts may include Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Instagram, Snapchat and Google+. Determine who manages the social media accounts and discuss how they can help to promote the program.

**Are there any dedicated local or regional news outlets?** Some municipalities or regions may have online news websites that report on local issues. Often these outlets are looking for content and are willing to post and share information about local events and programs. Examples include Patch, NJ Spotlight, Mercer Me, South Jersey Local News, Central New Jersey News, and North Jersey News.

**Does your town have community social media pages?** Facebook often has town specific social media pages where information is shared through crowdsourcing. Crowdsourcing is the practice of obtaining information or input into a task or project by enlisting the services of many people typically via the Internet. These pages can be used to promote your program and advertise to gain more participants.

**Social media is visual media.** When crafting social media messaging, it is best to remember that people generally scroll past long paragraphs and are more likely to stop and look at a picture or watch a video. Keep this in mind when developing your social media outreach plans. Keep your messages simple and when possible utilize pictures, infographics and videos.

#### **Step 5: Determine Administrative Responsibility and Program Budget**

**Option 1:** The project committee should determine who will administer the Green Business Recognition Program on an ongoing basis. Administrative responsibility may be assigned to municipal staff or municipal board or commission. Or it might be taken on by the local Chamber of Commerce or another organization. It is important to clearly designate where applications will be received, who will determine whether businesses have met the criteria, and what body can revise the criteria in the future. If the recognition program will require verification of green business practices, specify who will conduct inspections.

**Option 2:** The project committee must reach out to the [NJSBR](#) to coordinate administrative responsibility. The project committee team will be required to designate a lead contact person to the NJSBR. This person will serve as the community liaison for business applications and advise the development of the [community web page](#). All business applications must be submitted through the [NJSBR website](#) and will be reviewed, verified and approved by the NJSBR program. The NJSBR will share information about pending and approved applications with the designated contact person. Additionally, the NJSBR may request assistance from the designated contact person in finalizing business applications, scheduling meetings with applicants and renewing business memberships.

**Program Budget** The project committee should consider overall strategy and available resources to determine a budget for the Green Business Recognition Program. Project partners, such as the Chamber of Commerce or other local organizations, could be asked to take on some of the program costs or contribute staff time. A regional recognition program would allow localities to share resources. Fundraising efforts might target corporate sponsorships and local media might be approached to contribute free ad space or air time. A small application fee might be charged to participating businesses to defray the cost of materials.

Budget components may include:

- Staff time for program administration
- Green Business Certificates
- Green Business Window Decals
- Fees to marketing consultants or design firms
- Print publications
- Web publications
- Advertising purchases
- Ongoing technical support to businesses
- Staff time and transportation cost for inspections
- Space, materials, and staffing for a Green Business resource center
- Grants, loans or tax incentives for green businesses

#### **Step 6: Implement Program**

Host a press conference to announce the introduction of the Green Business Recognition Program. Print materials, post the web pages, and solicit local businesses for participation. Accept applications and conduct business inspections (if applicable). Once the first round of participants has been identified, distribute Green Business certificates and window decals. Publish a directory of these Green Businesses in print and online. Implement an ongoing advertising campaign to inform consumers about the program.

#### **Step 7: Renewals and Evaluation**

Businesses should renew their participation on an annual basis or another established time frame. Renewals may include reporting of progress toward sustainability goals and might require more challenging criteria each year. Project feedback should be solicited from participating businesses. The original project committee or a designated successor should reconvene periodically to evaluate program progress and, if necessary, revise participation criteria to ensure that the program continues to support the community's sustainability goals.

#### **What to submit to earn points for this action**

In order to earn points for this action, the following documentation must be submitted as part of the online certification application in order to verify that the action requirements have been met. The Green Business Recognition Program must be in effect at the time of submission with the required number of businesses participating.

There are two options for completing this action. At the top of the Action Submission page in the **Requested Points** section, please indicate the number of points the documentation will support.

**Option 1:** Municipalities can earn 10 points for establishing a Green Business Recognition Program for local companies that includes criteria for participation and a marketing strategy to recognize participants. The program may be structured as a general program for all businesses or targeted at a specific business sector (i.e. restaurants, hotels, marina's or other sectors). To be eligible for points, the municipality must serve as a partner in project development and implementation. The program may be administered directly by the municipality or through other organizations, such as the local Chamber of Commerce or Main Street program. A minimum two businesses must be participating in the Green Business Recognition Program.



**Option 2:** Municipalities can earn 20 points if the Green Business Recognition Program incorporates the criteria established by the [New Jersey Sustainable Business Registry Program \(NJSBR\)](#), and includes participation in the NJSBR (which is free) as a mandatory element in their Recognition Programs. The NJSBR was developed by the New Jersey Small Business Development Centers in partnership with the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection. It is an online registry where businesses can promote their sustainability initiatives and can receive tips and resources to help them grow greener. Sustainable Jersey communities that have decided to adopt the NJSBR are eligible to receive a [community page](#) on the website, listing all local registry participants. A minimum three businesses must be participating in the Green Business Recognition Program and the NJSBR.

1. **Description of Implementation** - In the text box provided on the action submission page, please provide a short description of the program including how it was developed, when it was implemented, the outreach strategy, the number of businesses contacted, and the number of approved participants.
2. If the municipality has created its own Green Business Recognition Program (Option 1), upload a written description of the program criteria, the marketing plan, and sample materials for promoting it combined into one pdf. If the program is based on the New Jersey Green Business Registry (Option 2), upload the marketing plan and sample materials for promoting the program combined into one pdf.
3. Upload the list of businesses participating in the program, the date they qualified to be recognized by program, and a description of the actions they have taken to meet the program criteria. For Option 1, a minimum of two businesses must be qualified participants, for Option 2 a minimum of three qualified businesses are required.

## Resubmission Requirements

To resubmit for points under this action, please provide updated information verifying that the municipality has continued to promote and grow the Green Business Recognition Program.

Municipalities should at a minimum provide the following information:

**Option 1:** Evidence that the municipality has helped the existing two businesses maintain their registration and has helped two new businesses to join the Program, along with documentation verifying that the municipality has continued to promote the program through marketing efforts and recognition events.

**Option 2:** Evidence that the municipality has helped the three existing businesses renew their membership on the New Jersey Sustainable Business Registry (membership is renewed biannually), along with assisting two new businesses to join the program. In addition, the municipality should also provide documentation verifying that it has continued to promote the program through marketing efforts and recognition events.

## Approved Action Expiration Date

Approved actions will be set to expire 2.5 years from the date of recertification.

### IMPORTANT NOTES:

There is a limit of six uploaded documents per action and individual files must not exceed 50 MB. Excerpts of relevant information from large documents are recommended.

All action documentation is available for public viewing after an action is approved. Action submissions should not include any information or documents that are not intended to be viewed by the public.

## Spotlight: What NJ municipalities are doing

### Montclair (Essex County)

In the spring of 2016, the Sustainable Montclair Green Team partnered with Montclair State University's PSEG Institute for Sustainability Studies, Montclair State University's Sustainability Science and Geography programs, the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection's Office of Sustainability, and the Montclair Center Business Improvement District (B.I.D.), to implement the Montclair Green Business Program. Montclair created a two-tier program, incorporating the New Jersey Sustainable Business Registry. Montclair's Green Business Program consists of a basic Green Business certification (Tier 1) plus a Green Business "Leader" level for businesses incorporating the New Jersey Sustainable Business Registry (Tier 2). Through the partnership with Montclair State University a team of students assisted the municipality in performing a door-to-door canvass/survey around all of Montclair's commercial districts and helped the Township develop a green business seal for store front displays. To date, eighteen establishments have become Certified Montclair



Green Businesses and two businesses have become Montclair Green Business Leaders via membership on the New Jersey Sustainable Business Registry. Montclair has promoted its Green Business Program through articles in its local newspaper, door to door canvassing and recognition by its Mayor.

### **Princeton (Mercer County)**

Since 2015, Sustainable Princeton (SP), a non-profit that works closely with the Municipality of Princeton, collaborated with the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection's Office of Sustainability to promote the New Jersey Sustainable Business Registry to Princeton businesses. Princeton took the approach of fully adopting the criteria of the Registry to certify its local businesses. By using the Registry as its recognition program, Princeton has been able to focus on marketing to its local businesses and now has more businesses on the Registry than any other municipality in New Jersey. SP promoted the registry by hosting a workshop to help businesses through the registration process, met one-on-one with businesses and the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection to help facilitate the application process and encouraged businesses to adopt more sustainable behavior. SP hosted a Green Business Great Ideas Event at the Princeton Public Library in November 2015 where local green businesses were invited to speak about the benefits of adopting sustainable business practices and the benefits of being on the Registry. SP helped to promote the businesses on the Registry by recognizing them on its social media channels. It also organized a recognition event at a Princeton Council meeting in December of 2016 where the Mayor and Council recognized each business on the Registry with a certificate of recognition from the town. These events were marketed via word of mouth, social media and flyers.

### **Verona (Essex County)**

In 2016, Verona launched a Green Business Recognition Program. The Program goals were three part; to encourage and support sustainable operating practices via education and incentives, to increase community awareness of and investment in local business and to improve business satisfaction with the municipality by providing opportunities for networking and camaraderie. Verona's Green Business Program utilized a simplified application, which required businesses to satisfy five out of ten generally recognized sustainability actions. Verona also included a "wildcard" criteria to allow entrants to submit actions – general or industry-specific – not on the list. Once in the program, Verona helped businesses with the actions needed to enter the New Jersey Sustainable Business Registry. This help included coaching (through Green Team volunteers, guest professionals, and peer-to-peer) and administrative support (interpreting New Jersey Sustainable Business Registry criteria and completing application forms). Verona promoted its Green Business Program by posting information on its municipal website. Additionally, with the help of Montclair State University students, Verona conducting door-to-door canvassing of businesses to recruit a core business group. Green Team members compiled a database of the town's 300+ businesses to track program progress and to use as a contact list. Verona recognized its Green Businesses at their community Green Fair, with the Mayor honoring the businesses. Local media also promoted businesses being recognized for their environmental commitments.

## **Resources**

**The following resources may be helpful in completing this action.**

*Funding Resources:*

### **ANJEC Sustainable Communities Funding Opportunities**

<http://www.anjec.org/SustFunding.htm>

*Education/Training Resources:*

### **Fairleigh Dickinson University's Institute for Sustainable Enterprise**

<http://view.fdu.edu/default.aspx?id=2354>

### **New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection Stewardship Links**

<http://www.nj.gov/dep/enforcement/stewardship/stewardshiplinks.html>

### **New Jersey Sustainable Business Registry Resources for Businesses**

The Registry provides tips and resource for businesses in eleven areas: Management and Leadership, Waste, Energy, Transportation, Water, Certification Programs, Green Building, Environmental and Community Restoration, Industry Specific Practices, Emergency Preparedness and Community Efforts.

<http://registry.njsbdc.com/resources>

The Registry also provides information about calculating environmental and financial savings. Tools provided

included, calculators for Electric Savings, Lighting Savings, Natural Gas Savings, Vehicle Fuel Savings, Waste Savings, and Water Savings.

<http://registry.njsbdc.com/calculations-tools>

#### **Rutgers EcoComplex Environmental Incubator**

[http://ecocomplex.rutgers.edu/incubator\\_businesses.php](http://ecocomplex.rutgers.edu/incubator_businesses.php)

#### **Union County, N.J. Green Connection**

The county provides tips and resources for businesses in four areas: operations, purchasing, recycling, and infrastructure. Within each area, resources are provided, including websites useful for certain sectors like restaurants.

<http://conserve.restaurant.org/>

#### **Case Studies:**

##### ***Local Initiatives***

#### **Somerset County Business Partnership**

This business association's "Sustainable Somerset" program recognizes the need for sustainable business and has created a pledge program, where businesses are recognized for committing to sustainable behaviors. The program also offers a "Green Buildings Toolkit," with a focus on energy reductions and funding sources.

<http://www.scbp.org/get-involved/committees-and-task-forces/sustainable-somerset/go-green-somerset>

#### **Upper Township Green Business Recognition Program**

A Green Business Assessment campaign has been initiated by the Upper Township Business Association (UTBA), in conjunction with the Upper Township Green Team. The campaign consists of a check-list for business self-assessment of internal "green" practices. The self-assessment checklist covers areas of recycling, waste-reduction, energy conservation, water conservation, purchasing local and purchasing recycled. In addition to providing recognition for members that operate their businesses with "green" best practices, the program will heighten awareness of the general guidelines that lead to a more sustainable community.

<http://www.upperbiz.com/index.php/programs/green-business-recognition>

##### ***Local Initiatives Beyond NJ***

**California Green Business Program** The California Green Business Program works with small to medium sized businesses to grow a vibrant and healthy green economy. It is led by a coalition of cities and counties, that locally implement the program. County programs are generally available to businesses located in all cities within that county. Twenty-four cities and counties are currently participating.

<http://www.greenbusinessca.org/>

#### **California -- Marin County Green Business Program**

The Green Business Program is a voluntary partnership among business leaders, government agencies and non-profit organizations. The program recognizes and promotes businesses that demonstrate continuous compliance with applicable environmental regulations, conserve energy, water, and other materials, implement sound environmental practices that prevent pollution and waste generation, and share environmentally responsible practices with other businesses in the community. The Marin County green business program is part of the Bay Area Green Business Program. There are over 2,750 certified Green Businesses located in the Bay Area. <http://www.marincounty.org/depts/cd/divisions/sustainability/green-business-program>

#### **Cleveland Green Technologies Business Grant Program**

The Green Technology Business Grant Program is designed to attract new green technology businesses or to expand existing green technology businesses in the City of Cleveland. Grant assistance can be applied to green technology businesses that are creating five (5) or more new jobs in the City within the first year or for existing businesses with substantial job creation. Eligible applicants may receive grants of up to 0.5% of new payroll to the City for up to five years and may also qualify for an additional \$5,000 Moving Assistance Grant. <http://www.rethinkcleveland.org/About-Us/Our-Programs/Green-Technology-Business-Grant-Program.aspx>

#### **Kings County, WA, Recognition Programs**

A variety of programs in the Seattle area recognize green businesses, including EnviroStars certification for pollution prevention and reductions in hazardous waste, Green Up recognition for purchasing green energy, and Green Globe awards for outstanding achievement in environmental stewardship.

- EnviroStars: <https://envirostars.greenbiztracker.org/>

- Green Up: <http://www.seattle.gov/light/Green/greenPower/greenupC.asp>
- Green Globe: <http://www.kingcounty.gov/environment/grants-and-awards/green-globe-award.aspx>

### **Knoxville Chamber Green Business Recognition Program**

Administered by the Knoxville Chamber of Commerce, this program provides recognition to companies achieving a certain number of actions organized into sustainability categories of Waste Prevention, Recycling, Purchasing, Energy and Water Conservation, and "Involving Stakeholders in greening your business."  
<http://www.knoxvillechamber.com/green-business-program>

### **Lafayette, California Green**

This initiative offered by a Chamber of Commerce's Green Committee aims to help and recognize local businesses "committed to adopting green practices." It focuses on the promotion of green businesses coupled with ongoing education and outreach. Resources provided include on-site audits, help from green consultants, checklists, and tips. Recognition utilizes a window sticker and virtual logo.

The Program three levels of recognition; however, only the highest qualifies as certification and complies with the Bay Area Green Business Program. At first, members only pledge to adopt best practices. The second level ("Lafayette Green") requires actual adoption of basic green practices. The third level ("Certified Green Business") requires adoption of an advanced level of green practices and has been certified by the county's Bay Area Green Business Program.

<http://www.lafayettechamber.org/community/lafayette-green/>

### **Portland Sustainability at Work Program**

The City of Portland offers several resources and programs to encourage sustainability among area businesses. The City provides no cost sustainability advisors to businesses interested in implementing sustainable practices. Portland also has a three-level green business certification program called "Sustainability at Work". In addition, the City also publishes a Sustainability newsletter for businesses and hosting other resources on its website.

<https://www.portlandoregon.gov/sustainabilityatwork/>

### **Salt Lake City Green e2 Business Program**

Salt Lake City's Environmentally and Economically Sustainable (e2) business program offers initial certification for businesses that assess current practices and establish meaningful, quantifiable goals for improvement. Annual renewals are granted to businesses that monitor their energy use, resource consumption, and waste production, and that demonstrate progress toward sustainability improvement goals.

<http://www.slcgreen.com/e2-business-program>

### **State and Nonprofit Examples:**

#### **Initiative Foundation Green Business Loan Fund**

A project of the nonprofit The Initiative Foundation, the Green Business Loan Fund provides up to \$500,000 for businesses that preserve the environment, reduce energy demands or recycle existing waste streams.

<http://www.ifound.org/economy/business-financing/>

#### **Stony Brook-Millstone Watershed Association's River-Friendly Business Certification Program**

The Stony Brook-Millstone Watershed Association is a nonprofit organization that offers a River-Friendly Business Certification with criteria in the areas of water quality management, water conservation techniques, wildlife and habitat enhancement, and education and outreach. Specific goals and requirements are tailored to each business, and technical assistance is provided by association staff. Businesses that meet the certification criteria are granted public recognition including a plaque and award presentation.

<http://thewatershed.org/conservation/river-friendly/>

#### **Wisconsin Green Tier**

An example of regulatory incentives, Green Tier is a statewide program in Wisconsin that encourages businesses to exceed the environmental standards required by law. Two tiers of participation offer benefits such as less frequent inspections, more flexible compliance standards and streamlined permitting.

<http://dnr.wi.gov/topic/greentier/>

### **General Resources on Action Topic:**

#### **American Sustainable Business Council**

<http://asbcouncil.org/>

#### **Business Alliance for Local Living Economies**

<https://bealocalist.org/>

**Green America's Green Business Network**

<http://www.greenbusinessnetwork.org/>

**Institute for Local Self Reliance**

<http://www.ilsr.org/>

**New Jersey Clean Communities Litter Prevention for Businesses Guide** Developed in partnership with the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection, the litter prevention guide provides information to businesses about including litter prevention and cleanup in company sustainability programs and along with numerous recommended strategies. <https://www.njclean.org/images/best-practices/resources/litter-items/Litter-Prevention-for-Businesses-Guide.pdf>

**New Jersey Green Association**

<http://nj-green.org/>

**New Jersey Sustainable Business Council**

<http://asbcouncil.org/nj>

**New Jersey Sustainable Business Registry**

<http://registry.njsbdc.com/>

**NJDEP, Division of Climate Change Mitigation and Monitoring Bureau of Sustainability - Recycle Right NJ Businesses** [https://www.nj.gov/dep/dshw/recycling/RecycleRightNJ\\_Businessess.0826.pdf](https://www.nj.gov/dep/dshw/recycling/RecycleRightNJ_Businessess.0826.pdf)