Making a Game Plan for Getting Certified

February 5, 2020
Presenter

Samantha A. McGraw
Program Manager
Agenda

1. Program Overview
2. Moving Toward Certification
3. 2020 Program Updates
4. Applying for Certification
5. Actions & Resources Help you Get Ahead
6. Final Thoughts & Take Aways
7. Updates Still to Come
8. Question & Answer Session
Program Overview
What is Sustainable Jersey?

A nonprofit organization that provides **tools, trainings** and **financial incentives** to support communities as they pursue sustainability programs.

$5.6 million in grants to municipalities and schools through the Sustainable Jersey Grants Program for sustainability initiatives

Washington Township (Gloucester) receives a $2,000 grant for green team support
Sustainable Jersey Stats

- 2009 Program Started
- 80% Participating
- 89% Population
- 45% of Participants Certified

- 151 Certified
- 53 Certified
- 1 Star
Actions

Action Sections

• What is it?
• Why is it important?
• Who should be involved?
• How long will it take and what will it cost?
• What to do and how to do it
• What to submit
• Spotlights
• Resources
“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.
Moving Toward Certification
Certification Steps

**Certification awarded after review and verification**

1. Pass resolution & register municipality
2. Form mandatory green team
3. Meet criteria for bronze or silver certification
4. Submit documentation for each action
Develop a Plan

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

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

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

**Priority Actions Webinar Recording & Presentation**
View the webinar recording and presentation [here](#)
Most Popular Actions

Start Up Actions

• Actions that have been attempted the most by municipalities and have the HIGHEST success rate of approval upon review.

Some popular action areas include:

• Arts & Culture
• Community Partnership & Outreach
• Energy
• Food
• Health & Wellness
• Natural Resources
• Public Information & Engagement
• Waste Management
Master Action Tracking Spreadsheet

Available on Sustainable Jersey [website]

Spreadsheet includes:
• Action name
• Submission requirements
• Look back period
• Approval period
• Resubmission requirements
• Points
2020 Program Updates
2020 Census Complete Count Initiative
Why An Accurate Census Count is Important

$23 billion in federal funding for New Jersey depends on Census counts, like SNAP, transportation planning, Environmental Programs, and more.

Two fewer representatives in Congress and two fewer electoral votes than in 1990.

Important to improve the count, especially in hard-to-count communities, across the state for full representation so communities can plan and manage public goods.

Information annotated from Advocates for Children of New Jersey
Role of Green Teams & Getting Started

As a **trusted community voice**, green teams can help improve participation rates by sharing information about the importance of an accurate and complete count.

**Get Started!**
- Download the [flyer](#)
- Work with or establish a [Complete Count Committee](#)
- Become a [Census Partner](#)
- Review Advocates for Children of New Jersey’s [Census Ambassador Toolkit](#)
Earning Sustainable Jersey Points

Community Education & Outreach: Census 2020 outreach efforts performed by municipal elected or appointed officials and/or staff or green team volunteers.

Innovative Community Project: Implement a comprehensive Census 2020 education and outreach effort that includes multiple communications strategies and establishes a site, referred to as Census Kiosk, where people can complete the census.

Census Webinar
Recording and presentation are available on the Sustainable Jersey website
Community Gardens

10 to 20 Points

Variable point allowing towns to earn up to 20 points for a community garden, using environmentally friendly gardening practices, and donating produce.

What to Submit

1. Community garden submission questionnaire.
2. Required supporting documentation.
Energy

- **Community-Led Solar Initiatives:** 5 to 15 Points
- **Residential Energy Efficiency Outreach:** 10 to 20 Points
- **Purchase Alternative Fuel Vehicles:** 5 to 15 Points

**Questions?** Contact Nancy Quirk, Energy Program Manager, 609-771-2902 or quirkn@tcnj.edu

What’s New in 2020? Program Updates Webinar Recording & Presentation

Learn more about updates to Energy and other program actions in the webinar recording and presentation [here](#).
Applying for Certification
## 2020 Certification Cycle Timeline

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| May 17            | Initial Application Deadline  
• Indicate actions you plan to earn credit for by marking “Completed” |
| Early-July        | First round review comments provided                                |
| September 11**    | Revision deadline to be eligible for recognition at the 2020 Sustainable Jersey Luncheon during the NJLM Conference |
| Mid-October       | Second round review comments provided                                |
| November 22       | FINAL application deadline                                           |
| Mid-December      | Final decision on pending applications                               |

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

- Certified October
  - Remain at current point level
  - Resubmit November for more points
    - Certified at higher point level December
    - Retain same point value from October certification
    - Certified December
    - Not Certified December
- Not Certified October
  - Resubmit November
- Not Certified December
Accessing & Using Your Application
Your Application

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

• Click “Begin/Update Application” on Municipal Dashboard
• Living document – file cabinet that can constantly change and get updated
• View the application’s current status, history, reviewer feedback, access information in “Help”
• Search actions and track progress

Application Overview
  View details and history | Help

| Current Status | IN PROGRESS
This application is IN PROGRESS |
| Application History | |
  This applicant has applied 0 times |
| Reviewer Feedback | 0 published comments
  0 unpublished comments
  0 archived comments |

Reviewer Feedback: 0 comments

IN PROGRESS
Working on Your Application

3 Statuses for New Applications

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Status</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Unplanned</td>
<td>Default status if action has never been worked on</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Planned</td>
<td>Changed by user to indicate it will or has been worked on</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Completed</td>
<td>Changed by a user to indicate the action submission is completed including the uploading of supporting documentation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Additional Statuses

- Must Revise, Approved, Not Approved, Expired
Variable Point Actions

The points awarded 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 Submission Page

- Provide documentation for specific actions
- Update the status of the action
- Enter a narrative description
- Upload documentation
- Save action submission

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 save.

Status
Current action submission status: Planned

Points
Points for this action are not available.

DESCRIPTION OF IMPLEMENTATION:

In the text box below, please provide a short summary (300 word maximum) of what was accomplished and the impact it had or will have on the school community. Include relevant references to the uploaded materials. If you are pasting information into the text box, please be sure to check the content and format of the entry.

Type your text here about how you completed the action.

UPLOAD SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Please upload the supporting documentation required as outlined in the "What to submit to earn points for this action" section of the action. Simply enter a document title, click on the Choose File button to select the file, and then click on the Upload button. Up to six files can be uploaded. Each file must be uploaded individually. Individual files cannot exceed 20 MB. If there is a need to provide more than six documents, please combine documents into one PDF file. To remove any uploaded file, simply click the "X" in the column labeled "Delete." Be sure to click on the Save Action Submission before exiting this page.

Document Title (optional)
Diversity on Boards & Commissions Documentation

Choose File | File not chosen

Upload

Type | Title | Uploaded On | Delete
--- | --- | --- | ---
| Diversity on Boards & Commissions Documentation | 3/11/2015 at 01:44 PM | |
Action Submission Tips

#1
Read the action descriptions in order to understand what the action requires

#2
Provide a summary of what was accomplished that aligns 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

• **Search Actions** to view different point combinations
• Mark actions “completed”
• Action Totals will recalculate
• Submit button turns yellow when the combination of Approved and Completed actions meets minimum certification requirements
• Submit!

**ACTION TOTALS**
(Completed, Approved)

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

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

To achieve **silver** certification, see certification criteria above.

Submit Application for Review and Certification
Reviewer Feedback

Feedback available at the bottom of the action submission page or top of the application.

Action Submission Page:

REVIEWER FEEDBACK
No feedback has been published.

Top of Application:

0 published comments
0 unpublished comments
26 archived comments

Automatic Email
Approved or Must Revise
Archived Comments

@SJ_Program • #SustainableJersey
# Why Actions are Not Approved

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pitfall</th>
<th>How to Overcome</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Action expired/too old</td>
<td>Review look-back period; Update action as necessary.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proper documentation not submitted</td>
<td>Review 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

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

Atlantic-Cape May Hub
Mercer County Sustainability Coalition
Monmouth County Hub
Ocean County Sustainability Hub
Somerset County Green Leadership Hub
Sustainable Bergen County
Sustainable Essex Alliance
Tri-County Sustainability Alliance
Union County Hub

@SJ_Program • #SustainableJersey
Helpful Resources
Transportation Management Associations

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

Other Organizations

These are some of MANY organizations that can help with actions. View the **Resources** section of all actions for more information.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NJ Prevention Network</th>
<th>ANJEC</th>
<th>NJ Bicycle &amp; Pedestrian Resource Center</th>
<th>Rutgers Cooperative Extension</th>
<th>Watershed Ambassadors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Prescription Drug</td>
<td>• Sustainable Land Use Pledge</td>
<td>• Complete Streets</td>
<td>• Food</td>
<td>• Water-related actions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Anti-Idling</td>
<td>• Natural Resources Inventory</td>
<td>• Bicycle and/or Pedestrian Plan</td>
<td>• Green Infrastructure</td>
<td>• Tree planting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Environmental Commission &amp; Site Plan Review</td>
<td></td>
<td>• Water Conservation Education</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Single-Use Plastics</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Quick Guide to Certification

1. Sign In/Sign up for Website Account
2. Pass a Resolution to Register with the Program
3. 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

• 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: It is doable!

• Questions? Call us if you do not know how to complete an action and we will connect you with the reviewer.

• Reach out early and often to ensure a successful submission.
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
Certification Application Deadline

Sunday, May 17 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
2020 Updates Still to Come - New Website
Sustainable Jersey Municipal Certification Program

80% of municipalities are participating and 86% of NJ's population lives in these communities

- 437 Participating Municipalities
- 205 Certified Municipalities
- 15,218 Actions Approved

152 Bronze Certified
53 Silver Certified
1 Total Gold Star Awarded

Need Funding? Sustainable Jersey Grants Available
Applications due Friday, February 14, 2020

Participating Communities
View participating communities and their supporting documentation for certification.

View Map
Municipal Dashboard

Listed below is the municipal account(s) for which you are an identified user. To gain access to additional accounts, you must be invited by a current user.

Need Help?

If you have questions about what to do next now that you have access to your municipal dashboard, download and review the Application User Guide or visit the FAQs page.

If you have additional questions contact us at info@sustainablejersey.com or 609-771-2938.

! Test Muni

- Update Application
  Update your existing certification application

- Update Gold Star Application
  Update your existing Gold Star application

- Update Municipal Profile
  Update the primary contact, secondary contact, and certification report "introduction"

- Manage Municipal Users
  Manage municipal owners and contributors

- Download Resolution
  Click to download the municipal resolution
Test Muni Certification Application

Status: SUBMITTED
Reviewer Feedback: 0 comments

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
- Mandatory
- Priority

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.

Animals in the Community

Arts & Creative Culture

Brownfields

Community Partnership & Outreach

Diversity & Equity

Emergency Management & Resiliency

Energy

Food

Certification Criteria

- Required: 1
- Priority: 2
- Points: 150
- Categories: 6

Show requirements for:
- BRONZE
- SILVER

Action Totals

(Completed, Approved)
Upcoming Grants & Webinars
Grant Funding Available

**Application Deadline:** Friday, February 14 at 11:59pm

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

![Sustainable Jersey Logo](sustainable-jersey-certified.png)

PSEG Foundation

@SJ_Program • #SustainableJersey
Census Webinar

Thursday, February 6 at 1pm

REGISTER

Learn more about the 2020 Census, the various resources and tools you can use to educate your community, how your efforts will pay off with certification points today, and the equitable distribution of federal funding and political representation for the next decade. For more information about how your green team can get involved in 2020 Census education and outreach efforts, download the flyer.
Certification Webinars

Stay in the Game! Strategize Your Recertification
Monday, February 10, 7:00pm – 8:00pm REGISTER
Tuesday, February 11, 11:00am – 12:00pm REGISTER

Moving Up to Silver Certification
Wednesday, February 19, 11:00am – 12:00pm REGISTER

Green Team 2.0: Building Your Capacity & Promoting Your Team
Wednesday, March 4, 11:00am – 12:00pm REGISTER

Certification Deadline: Sunday, May 17
Save the Date:
2020 New Jersey Sustainability Summit

Friday, June 12, 8:00am – 4:30pm
Bell Works, Holmdel, NJ