

## 7.1 Hold a Sustainability Event

5 Points

10 Points

15 Points

20 Points

25 Points

### Objective

Bring together your community in fun, informative, and constructive ways, through energetic events that can enroll residents and business owners in sustainability practices.

### What to Do

Develop a new event AND/OR incorporate sustainability practices into an established event. Points will be awarded as follows:

- Hold 1 new, unique event with sustainability focus = **5 points**
- Hold between 5 and 10, unique events with sustainability focus = **10 points**
- Hold more than 10 unique events with a sustainability focus = **15 points**
- Apply sustainability initiatives to 5 existing events = **5 points**
- Apply sustainability initiatives to more than 5 existing events = **10 points**

Any municipalities that work regionally to complete this Action will each receive points as part of the collaborative. Activities that are used to earn points toward this Action may not be used to earn points toward any other Sustainable CT Action (i.e., no "double-counting").

1. Hold a new event. Possibilities for events include, but are not limited to:

*Panel Discussions* on different aspects of sustainability;

*Film Festival* of earth-friendly documentaries;

*Local Food* Farmers' Market or Dinner;

*A Green Fair* that educates and encourages people of all ages to adopt a more sustainable lifestyle;

*House Tour* of homes that have introduced green technologies or passive technologies;

*Car Show* of fuel-efficient vehicles that includes education about driving and maintenance practices that reduce emissions and consumption and shows how to avoid idling;

*Art Attack* showcases environmentally-themed, or sustainably made artwork in and around areas of your community not typically designated as art spaces;

*Themed/Holiday Event* such as an energy vampire walk through a school to discover energy losses (it's a haunted house that's scary because it isn't sustainable);

*Active and Passive Recreation* events such as trail system creation or beautification;

*Mobility Awareness Day* provides information about transit and vehicle options, offers transit tickets at town offices and local stores, and shares a list of places in town open to recreational walking and biking;

*Safe Routes to Schools Program* shows families safe bicycle and walking routes for their children to get to school; and

*Large-scale Open Streets Event* temporarily closes the street to cars in multiple neighborhoods, thus encouraging outdoor play, walking, biking, and neighborhood block parties.

**Submit:** A description of the event that highlights the sustainability focus and how that focus will be demonstrated.

2. Provide municipal support for the event, either financially or with in-kind services, or both.

**Submit:** Identification of the municipal support provided.

3. Track the publicity and number of event attendees. Prepare by setting up evaluation criteria ahead of time. For example: If you are having an event on transportation, encourage people to carpool and record the energy and emissions saved per carpool rider. You might add specific details about participation or networking advantages.

**Submit:** Event statistics including the number of participants and any other quantifiable data. List possible follow-up actions/activities for your or another town. List lessons learned, possible improvements or next steps, and possible contacts for future event planning.

AND/OR

1. Incorporate sustainability into an existing event and educate event attendees about the sustainability initiatives incorporated into the event. For example, include compost bins with signage and live education about reducing food waste at an annual food festival.

**Submit:** A description of how sustainability initiatives were incorporated into the event and how attendees were educated.

## Potential Municipal and Community Collaborators

Staff from the public works, or parks and recreation departments, the town manager/selectman/mayor's office and representatives from local arts groups, local educational institutions, nonprofits or ad-hoc groups interested in sustainability could be helpful in implementing this action.

## Funding

For a complete listing of potential funding opportunities to assist with implementing Sustainable CT Actions, please visit the [Sustainable CT Grants Portal](#), which is searchable by Action. Please also visit the [Sustainable CT Resources for Certification](#) page for opportunities for technical assistance and other supports.

## Resources

### *Toolkits, Calculators, Guidance Documents*

- Town of Mansfield, "[Planning Guidance for Low Waste Events and Gatherings](#)"
- CT Department of Energy and Environmental Protection, "[Green Your Training, Meetings and Events](#)"
- Yale Sustainability, "[Green Events](#)"
- [GoNewHavenGo](#), a sustainable transportation coalition
- [CT Green Bank](#): No-cost technical assistance

## Why This Matters

In and of themselves, events are excellent communications tools. If your community wants to become a leader in sustainable living and working, then adding a sustainability component to an existing event or developing a new one that focuses on environmental stewardship will communicate that intention both within and outside the community.

## **Benefits**

Events bolster town pride by giving all community members the chance to come together, share experiences, build collective memories, and plan for the future. An engaging event can have educational value, entertainment value, and opportunity for new business or economic development that will contribute to overall community health.

A well-planned event, customized to meet the needs, interests, and unique character of your community, will weave sustainable considerations into your culture.

## **CT Success Stories**

- Cornwall, CT: [Going Green Fair](#)

## **Credit for Past Action**

- Events must be held within 1 year prior to application submission.