4.2 Adapt Permitting Process to Promote Sustainable Development

5 Points | 10 Points | 15 Points | 20 Points

Objective

Promote and incentivize sustainable development by creating an efficient and user-friendly land use permitting process.

Complementary action:

- Integrate Sustainability into Plan of Conservation and Development and Zoning

What to Do

The more you do, the more points you can earn.

1. Develop sustainability checklists for zoning and building applicants that identify sustainable site plan design elements. Examples are available in the Sustainable CT action Integrate Sustainability into the Plan of Conservation and Development and Zoning. **(5 points)**

   Submit: A copy of your sustainability checklists.
2. Identify applications where expedited permitting is viable; amend zoning regulations to provide an as-of-right (Site Plan) approval process for projects that meet sustainable design standards as established in the regulations (for example, SolSmart). Consider including projects located in distressed/under-developed/vulnerable areas. **(5 points)**

   Submit: A copy of amended zoning regulations, noting where revisions were made to allow as-of-right uses that meet sustainable design standards.
3. Establish or amend your municipal policy for pre-application review. Adopt a written policy that recommends review of projects prior to submission of formal plans and applications. The policy should incorporate coordinated review by multiple departments, a coordinated review schedule for approval by multiple departments, and clearly reference the checklist and standards developed above for sustainable plan review. **(5 points)**

   Submit: A copy of the written policy describing the pre-application review process.
4. Review town processes for permitting and create a Development Review Manual which includes a description of the pre-application process established. A Development Review Manual is a step-by-step guide to navigating your municipal land use process from start to finish. **(5 points)**

   Submit: A copy of your Development Review Manual.

Credit for Past Action

- Actions must have been completed within 3 years prior to application submission.

Potential Municipal and Community Collaborators

Staff from the planning and zoning, engineering, building, and fire departments and a representative from

the planning and zoning, inland wetlands, conservation, or energy commission 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.

- Urban Act Grant Program
- Municipal Grant Program (MGP)
- CHEJ Small Grants Program

Resources

Toolkits, Calculators, Guidance Documents

- Capitol Region Council of Governments, "Sustainable Land Use Regulation Project"
- US Environmental Protection Agency, "Sustainable Design and Green Building Toolkit for Local Governments"
- New York City Department of Design and Construction Office of Sustainable Design, "Sustainable Urban Site Design Manual"
- Acadia Center, "Community Energy Vision, Action Guide for Connecticut"
- The following resources requirement membership or payment to view:
    - Wayne Feiden, Planning Advisory Service (PAS) Report #582 Local Planning Agency Management
    - Wayne Feiden, with Elisabeth Hamin, Planning Advisory Service Report # 565
    - American Planning Association, Zoning Practice Process Archives

Organizations and Relevant Program

- American Planning Association

Benefits

By reducing permitting hurdles and administrative costs, and providing incentives to developers to incorporate sustainable elements early in a proposed project's design stage, your community can encourage and support sustainable development practices. The guide will have a dual benefit of reducing time and costs to town and applicants for projects.