4.1 Integrate Sustainability into Plan of Conservation and Development and Zoning

5 – 90 Points

Action Updates

This action has been revised for the **current certification cycle**. A version of this action from the prior program year is available for comparison. Edits are highlighted in yellow. (Last update 2019)

Objective

Integrate sustainability principles into land use planning rules.

Complementary action:

- Adapt Permitting Process to Promote Sustainable Development

What to Do

If you collaborate with other municipalities or other stakeholders to implement this Action, please describe the partnership in the "partners" box of your submission. Please also consult this guidance document to help your municipality earn points for actions pursued in partnership. Regional collaboration and other forms of partnership are highly encouraged.

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

1. Plan of Conservation and Development **(5 - 50 points)**

   a. Include at least four Hazard Mitigation Plan goals into your most recent Plan of Conservation and Development (POCD). There are two required goals (indicated), and you may select the other two goals from the list below. **(5 points)**

   Hazard Mitigation Goals:

   - **REQUIRED:** Clearly identify up-to-date natural hazard areas and map them on the future land use map.
   - **REQUIRED:** Adopt land use policies in the POCD that encourage land protection within natural hazard areas and discourage development or redevelopment within natural hazard areas.
   - *OPTIONAL:* Provide adequate space for expected future growth in areas outside of natural hazard areas.
   - *OPTIONAL:* Identify/Incorporate an action to undertake an evacuation and shelter plan to deal with emergencies from natural hazards.
   - *OPTIONAL:* Adopt transportation policies that limit access to natural hazard areas.
   - *OPTIONAL:* Adopt economic development or redevelopment strategies that include provisions for mitigating natural hazards.
   - *OPTIONAL:* Institute infrastructure policies that limit extension of existing facilities that would encourage development in areas vulnerable to natural hazards. Limit extension of existing facilities and services that would encourage development in areas vulnerable to natural hazards.
   - *OPTIONAL:* Adopt a policy to harden/protect existing critical facilities and important cultural

resources that are located in vulnerable areas.

Submit: A copy of your adopted POCD and a completed Action 4.1 Worksheet A.

b. Incorporate three sustainability concepts from the list provided below. (Concepts drawn from American Planning Association, "Policy Guide on Planning for Sustainability"). Each additional concept above will yield 5 additional points (capped at 40). For each concept selected, you must describe how the concept was included in your POCD and include page(s) where referenced. For a list of examples of how you might include each concept see the "4.1 Sustainability Concepts in Action" sheet. **(20 points for first three concepts, 40 points max)**

- **Concept 1:** Land Use Actions toward Sustainability
- **Concept 2:** Transportation Actions toward Sustainability
- **Concept 3:** Housing and Building Actions toward Sustainability
- **Concept 4:** Economic Development Actions toward Sustainability
- **Concept 5:** Open Space/Recreation Actions toward Sustainability
- **Concept 6:** Infrastructure Actions toward Sustainability
- **Concept 7:** Growth Management Actions toward Sustainability
- **Concept 8:** Floodplain Management Actions toward Sustainability
- **Concept 9:** Watershed Planning/Management Actions toward Sustainability
- **Concept 10:** Resource Conservation Actions toward Sustainability
- **Concept 11:** Planning Processes/Education Actions toward Sustainability

Submit: A copy of your adopted POCD and a completed "Action 4.1 Worksheet B". For a list of examples of how you might include sustainability concepts in your POCD see the "4.1 Sustainability Concepts in Action."

c. Create an implementation guidance document for your POCD that integrates the sustainability concepts included. The implementation guide should include the following information for each action item in the POCD: lead department(s); anticipated cost (low-high); possible funding source; and priority level (low-high). **(5 points)**

Submit: A copy of your adopted POCD that includes your implementation guidance document. **NOTE:** You must complete 4.1.1 a (above) to receive credit for this section.

2. Land Use and Zoning Regulations. **(20-40 points)**

a. Incorporate at least three sustainability concepts (listed below) in your land use and zoning regulations. (Concepts drawn from American Planning Association, "Policy Guide on Planning for Sustainability"). Each additional concept above will yield 5 additional points (capped at 40). For each concept selected, you must describe how the concept is included in your zoning regulations and include page(s) where referenced. For a possible list of examples of how you might include each concept see the "4.1 Sustainability Concepts in Action" sheet. **(20 points for first three concepts, 40 points max)**

- **Concept 1:** Land Use Actions toward Sustainability
- **Concept 2:** Transportation Actions toward Sustainability
- **Concept 3:** Housing and Building Actions toward Sustainability
- **Concept 4:** Economic Development Actions toward Sustainability
- **Concept 5:** Open Space/Recreation Actions toward Sustainability
- **Concept 6:** Infrastructure Actions toward Sustainability
- **Concept 7:** Growth Management Actions toward Sustainability
- **Concept 8:** Floodplain Management Actions toward Sustainability
- **Concept 9:** Watershed Planning/Management Actions toward Sustainability
- **Concept 10:** Resource Conservation Actions toward Sustainability
- **Concept 11:** Planning Processes/Education Actions toward Sustainability

Submit: A copy of your zoning regulations and a completed "Action 4.1 Worksheet C". For a possible list of examples of how you might include sustainability concepts in your zoning regulations see the "Action 4.1 Sustainability Concepts in Action" sheet.

Credit for Past Action

For spring certification, count back from February 1st of the current year. For fall certification, count back from August 1st of the current year. For further clarification on determining if your prior work is eligible to earn points, click here.

- **This action must have been completed within the past 10 years.**

Potential Municipal and Community Collaborators

Staff from the planning and zoning, engineering, emergency management, public works, town council, and fire departments and representatives from the planning and zoning, inland wetlands, conservation, and energy commissions 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)

Resources

Toolkits, Calculators, Guidance Documents

- American Planning Association, "Policy Guide on Planning for Sustainability"
- State of CT, Office of Policy and Management, "Conservation & Development Policies: the Plan for Connecticut 2013-2018"
- American Planning Association, "The Sustainability Policy Framework,"
- American Planning Association, "Service Report Number 560 Hazard Mitigation: Integrating Best Practices into Planning,"
- Capitol Region Council of Governments, Sustainable Land Use Regulation Project
- Land Use Law Center, Pace University & US Green Building Council, "Technical Guidance Manual for Sustainable Neighborhood Development Rating System to Evaluate and Amend Local Plans, Codes, and Policies"
- Acadia Center, "Community Energy Vision, Action Guide for Connecticut"
- Sustainable CT Equity Toolkit)

Organizations and Relevant Programs

- American Planning Association
- Connecticut Conservation Districts

Why This Matters

Chapter 126 Section 8-23 of the Connecticut General Statutes requires each municipality to update a Plan of Conservation & Development (POCD) at least once every ten years through its designated land use commission. Although this statute prescribes several elements to be included in the document to guide growth, development, and preservation, your community can address its unique context and initiatives by

identifying overarching strategies and incorporating specialized analyses or studies.

Your POCD is your community's guide and policy document and should be the basis for infrastructure and development related decisions, particularly in capital budgeting and project reviews. Integrate the principles of sustainability into the plan to ensure that they become part of your community's development.

Historically, planning and zoning separated commercial and residential uses. This practice promoted car-dependent sprawl. Increasingly, communities around the country are pursuing Smart Growth, transit-oriented development (TOD) and other sustainable, supportive planning and zoning strategies that promote more compact, walkable, mixed-use, environmentally sensitive communities with a range of transportation and housing choices. Demand for such communities comes from individuals at all points in their life.

Benefits

The POCD provides a framework for consistent decision-making. It establishes a long-range vision for the community and provides guidance and recommendations on future land use. As a vehicle for strategic planning, your land use commission may also identify implementation actions through which it achieves its intended goals. These implementation actions often stipulate either the creation of, or edits to, legally-enforceable zoning regulations, and mechanisms to guide development and protect resources. Including sustainability practices provides breadth and depth to multiple areas such as hazard mitigation, site design, transportation, economic development, infrastructure, and housing.

Results include reduced greenhouse gas emissions, enhanced sustainable economic development, reduced transportation costs, increased active transportation, and community cohesion, and more types of housing and more availability of affordable housing.

CT Success Stories

Integration of sustainability into POCD:

- 2018 Hartford - Recognized Zoning Regulations
- 2018 New Haven - Integrated Concepts
- 2018 Westport - Integrated Concepts
- Mansfield, CT: Mansfield Tomorrow: Plan of Conservation and Development

Integration of sustainability into zoning regulations:

- **Hartford, CT: Hartford Zoning Regulations and Zoning Map**