11.2 Grow Sustainable and Affordable Housing Options

10 – 60 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 updated 2020)

Objective

Increase the availability of sustainable and affordable housing in your community.

A **webinar** regarding this action is available for viewing. Check out past webinars.

What to Do

The more you do, the more points you earn.

1. Identify the current percentage of affordable housing in your community. Municipalities with at least 10%, the threshold above which developers cannot use the Affordable Housing Appeals procedure, will receive points. ***Note:*** "Affordable" housing costs 30% or less than 80% of median income in the state (or 80% of area median income, if that figure is lower than the state's median income). This definition of "affordable" is consistent with that used in Section 8-30(g) of the Connecticut General Statutes. **(10 points)**

   Submit: A copy of the most recent annual Connecticut Department of Housing Affordable Housing Appeals List, showing that 10% or more of your municipality's housing stock is affordable. Alternatively, please simply note in your submission that your municipality is on the most recent annual Affordable Housing Appeals List. If your municipality is creating housing affordable to residents earning less than 80% of the lower of state or median income, please note the income level in your submission.

   Timeframe for Credit: Eligible for new action credit. This action falls under the action type "Data Tracking/Benchmarking and Meeting Performance Metrics" (see "Timeframe for Credit" Guidance Document for submission requirements).

2. Increase your municipality's affordable housing, as compared to a baseline year within the past 5 years. Establish or identify a baseline year of data for the percent of your municipality's housing stock that is affordable. Using the percentage listed on the most recent Connecticut Department of Housing Affordable Housing Appeals List at the time of submission, calculate the percentage point change of housing from the established baseline. For each ¼ percentage point increase or increase of 50 affordable units, 10 points will be awarded, up to a maximum of 40 points. **(10 - 40 points)**

   Submit: A copy of the most recent annual Connecticut Department of Housing Affordable Housing Appeals List, as well as the list for the baseline year to which you are comparing. Alternatively, please submit the affordable housing percentages for the current year and the baseline year, as reflected on the Department of Housing Affordable Housing Appeals Lists for the relevant years.

   Timeframe for Credit: Eligible for new action credit. This action falls under the action type "Data Tracking/Benchmarking and Meeting Performance Metrics" (see "Timeframe for Credit" Guidance Document for submission requirements).

3. Commit dedicated funding to affordable housing development. Funding may be directed as part of the municipal budget, through grants that your municipality had a key role in obtaining, or to outside services

that directly result in affordable housing development, including but not limited to housing development funds and trusts, provided that the municipality can articulate a clearly defined role in contributing to and/or administering those funds. **(10 points)**

Submit: A description of the amount of funding allocated, what was funded, and documentation of the funding, such as a copy of the municipal budget with the allocated funding for affordable housing development highlighted, a copy of the grant award that your municipality obtained, or the municipal contribution to outside services directly resulting in affordable housing development.

Timeframe for Credit: Eligible for new action credit and rolling credit. This action falls under the action type "Outreach, Education, Programs, Campaigns, Recognition/Designation in External Program, and Funding" (see "Timeframe for Credit" Guidance Document for submission requirements).

Ideally, your municipality will promote sustainable construction practices in affordable housing development and development in general by encouraging integrative design, consideration of location and neighborhood fabric, site improvements, water conservation, energy efficiency, building materials, healthy living environment, operations, maintenance and resident engagement. In future certification cycles, points may be awarded for sustainable construction.

Timeframe for Credit

Actions can either be "New" or considered for "Rolling Credit."

New Action Credit. Any action completed within the past three years (from January 1 of the year seeking certification) is eligible for potential certification points. If you are applying for recertification in your year of expiration, you may not claim New Action Credit for items that previously received credit.

Rolling Credit. For any action older than three years (from January 1 of the year seeking certification), you must demonstrate ongoing, currently relevant, and meaningful impact in your community to be considered for certification points. If you are applying for recertification in your year of expiration, you must apply for Rolling Credit for any item that previously received credit, even if it was completed within the past three years.

View the "Timeframe for Credit" Guidance Document for detailed submission requirements.

Engaging Partners

Sustainable CT encourages regional collaboration and other forms of partnership. For every action, please complete the "Partners" box in your submission, indicating the name(s) of any municipalities and/or organizations you partnered with (if any) and a brief description of your municipality's role. If you collaborate with other municipalities, each community will receive points. For additional information, please see the "Partners Guidance Document".

Potential Municipal and Community Collaborators

Planners, planning and zoning commissions, and social services departments within your municipality may collaborate with affordable housing developers, property owners, affordable housing advocates, housing finance agencies, public housing authorities, and community and regional residents and other stakeholders to implement this action.

Funding

If available, below are potential funding sources specific to this Action. 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 Support for Your Town page for opportunities for technical assistance and other supports.

- Home CT (Incentive Housing Zone) Program
- Urban Act Grant Program
- Municipal Grant Program (MGP)
- 2021 Sustainable CT Community Match Fund

- Connecticut Department of Housing Funding Opportunities
- Connecticut Housing Finance Authority Federal Low Income Housing Tax Credits
- Connecticut Housing Finance Authority Housing Tax Credit Contribution State Program
- Community Development Block Grant (CBDG) Program
- Section 108 Loan Guarantee Program
- HOME Investment Partnership Program
- Liberty Bank Foundation Affordable Housing Grants

Resources

Toolkits, Calculators, Guidance Documents

- Connecticut Department of Housing Affordable Housing Appeals Listing
- Ten Principles for Developing Affordable Housing
- 2015 Green Communities Criteria
- Desegregate CT: Zoning Atlas

Organizations and Relevant Programs

- Connecticut Housing Finance Authority
- Partnership for Strong Communities
- Connecticut Fair Housing Center
- Open Communities Alliance
- Urban Land Institute
- National Low Income Housing Coalition
- Enterprise Green Communities
- Connecticut Department of Housing
- Connecticut Department of Economic and Community Development
- Connecticut Office of Policy and Management

Why This Matters

Municipal and statewide economic challenges, changing demographics, challenges in affordability, and preferences for more walkable neighborhoods that offer high quality of life all suggest that Connecticut communities need to adapt their housing stock to emerging needs. For example, the vast majority of occupied homes in Connecticut are single-family, but demand is increasing for other housing types. The majority of our state's housing is more than 50 years old. Increasing need for energy efficient housing that utilizes more renewable energy and incorporates universal design and other features will demand retrofits and new construction.

Benefits

By expanding the availability of affordable housing in your community and using sustainable construction practices, you reduce the potential adverse environmental impacts of development. This Action also improves the physical, emotional and fiscal wellbeing of your residents, builds community, and increases equity in the community. Greater availability of affordable housing also increases the available property tax base and hence results in greater municipal economic well-being.

CT Success Stories

- Bristol - Jun 2020 Certification
- Essex - Oct 2019 Certification
- Manchester - Oct 2019 Certification
- New Britain - Jun 2020 Certification
- Bristol - Oct 2020 Certification
- Meriden - Oct 2020 Certification
- New Britain - Oct 2020 Certification
- Norwalk - Oct 2020 Certification