

## Implement an Affordable Housing Plan

### Action Updates

This action has been revised for the **current certification cycle**. Edits are highlighted in yellow. (Last updated 2023)

### Objective

Understand your community's residents and existing housing options, assess current and future housing needs, and implement equitable affordable housing strategies.

Complementary Actions:

- [Grow Affordable and Sustainable Housing](#)
- [Implement Policy for Sustainable, Diverse Housing Options](#)

### What to Do

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

For each of the items below, an inclusive planning process and creation of a proactive communications strategy is encouraged. For additional information, please consult the Sustainable CT Equity Toolkit in the Sustainable CT Action Optimize for Equity, as well as "Planning for Affordability in Connecticut: Affordable Housing Plan and Process Guidebook".

1. Create a housing committee with diverse membership, ideally reflective of the demographics of your community and region. Members may include representatives from planning, public health, housing authorities, schools, and social services; landlords; housing developers; residents (including both renters and homeowners); and individuals who work in your municipality and may not be able to afford to live in the community. Roles on the committee include bringing together local leaders to proactively plan for affordable housing; creating a constituency of advocates for more affordability in the community; and providing support to municipal leaders on decision-making related to affordable housing development. **(10 points)**

**Submit:** A list of names and titles/sectors of current members of the housing committee; a description of its community engagement process and communication strategy; and at least one additional piece of documentation related to the meetings, such as a promotional flyer, an agenda, minutes, presentations, or photographs.

**Timeframe for Credit:** Eligible for new action credit and rolling credit. This action falls under the action type "Committee/Task Force/Position Creation" (see "Timeframe for Credit" Guidance Document for submission requirements).

2. Create, expand or maintain your community's housing data profile, starting with information in municipal housing data profiles produced by the Partnership for Strong Communities (required) and potential additional data points outlined in this [worksheet 1](#) (optional for 5 additional points). Analyze the data and describe the implications of the data for your community's housing future by filling in [worksheet 2](#) (required). Present and discuss your municipality's housing data profile and your analysis of it as part of a community conversation, led by your community's housing committee (if you have one), with participation from a broad group of stakeholders, including one or more members of your municipality's legislative body and planning and zoning commission (or equivalent entity). **(10 or 15 points, if additional data is gathered as described in worksheet 1)**

**Submit:** Your recent municipal Partnership for Strong Communities housing data profile and other data, if pursuing 5 additional points (see worksheet 1), your completed housing data analysis worksheet

(worksheet 2), and the date on which you presented the data at a public meeting and which meeting (i.e., Town Council, Planning and Zoning Commission, etc.).

**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. Implement strategies identified in the Affordable Housing Plan adopted by your municipality and submitted to the CT Office of Policy and Management (as [required by State statute](#)). Examples of programs eligible for points under this Action are listed below; anything submitted for points must be a strategy in your municipality's Affordable Housing Plan. **(5-50 points)**

**The more you do, the more points you earn. Educational events or workshops earn 5 points, project implementation earns 15 points, and municipal policy changes earn 20 points.**

- o Update municipal zoning regulations to allow a more diverse housing stock.
- o Implement a first-time homebuyer program to provide financial assistance to low- and moderate-income homebuyers.
- o Preserve and/or promote affordable housing by providing tax incentives in exchange for affordable units in new or redeveloped housing, forming partnerships with affordable housing advocacy organizations, or using a Housing Trust Fund to place income limitations on new housing units.
- o Inventory municipally-owned properties for potential affordable housing development.
- o Host an educational or outreach event to educate community members (including residents, municipal officials, and local businesses) on affordable housing.

**Submit:** Documentation of the policy change, program, or educational event. For example, for a zoning change, submit the officially adopted zoning revision with the relevant portions highlighted; for a housing affordability program, submit a description of the program, number of participants, and outreach strategy; for an educational event, submit a description of the event, date of the event, number of participants, and a sample of educational material used or presented.

**Timeframe for Credit:** Eligible for new action credit. This action falls under the action type "Websites, Maps, Inventories, Checklists, Assessments, Plans, Ordinances, Policies, Regulations and Resolutions" (see "Timeframe for Credit" Guidance Document for submission requirements).

4. Distribute the completed affordable housing plan to relevant municipal departments, relevant regional and local organizations and community members, especially those involved in its creation. Conduct a presentation of the final affordable housing plan as part of a community conversation, led by your community's housing committee (if you have one), with participation from a broad group of stakeholders, including one or more members of your municipality's legislative body and planning and zoning commission (or equivalent entity). **(5 points)**

**Submit:** Evidence that you distributed affordable housing plan to relevant municipal departments and a copy of your presentation.

**Timeframe for Credit:** Eligible for new action credit and rolling credit. This action falls under the action type "Websites, Maps, Inventories, Checklists, Assessments, Plans, Ordinances, Policies, Regulations and Resolutions" (see "Timeframe for Credit" Guidance Document for submission requirements).

## 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. For additional information, please see the Partners Guidance Document.

### **Potential Municipal and Community Collaborators**

There are numerous potential collaborators for this action: anyone who collects and maintains information about your community demographics, your local elected officials and other representatives from your municipality’s governing board, the planning and zoning commission, public health professionals, transportation and housing agencies, redevelopment agencies, businesses, municipal planning department staff, nonprofit leaders, community leaders, regional councils of government and other regional planning groups and statewide and community housing organizations.

### **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 municipalities will 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 Connecticut’s housing stock is more than 50 years old, and the need for energy efficient housing that utilizes more renewable energy and incorporates universal design and other features will demand retrofits and new constructions.

### **Benefits**

Collecting, reviewing and analyzing your municipality’s housing data is the first step in planning for the community’s housing future, setting the stage for conducting a housing needs assessment. Things like transit-oriented development, affordable housing, accessible housing, and housing density often intertwine when building sustainable, thriving communities. With the information from the assessment, you’ll be able to lower adverse environmental impacts from development, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, improve health and wellness, enhance economic well-being, and increase community and regional equity.