



Sustainable Connecticut Community Certification Report

This is the Sustainable Connecticut Certification Report of Norwalk, a Sustainable Connecticut bronze certified applicant.

Norwalk was certified on October 27, 2020 with 260 points. Listed below is information regarding Norwalk's Sustainable Connecticut efforts and materials associated with the applicant's certified actions.

Contact Information

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Actions Implemented

Each approved action and supporting documentation for which Norwalk was approved for in 2020 appears below. Please enjoy this opportunity to view and learn from the information and materials provided.

Notes: Submission content was created by Norwalk, and Sustainable CT makes no claims, promises or guarantees about the accuracy, completeness, or adequacy of the submission, beyond that an individual reviewer approved at least some elements of the action for certification. Further, standards for actions below may have changed, and the documentation listed may no longer satisfy requirements for that action. Finally, approved actions here may include some documents and descriptions in support of action elements that were not approved, in addition to elements that were approved. In preparing your own application, please rely only on the action write-ups for the current certification year to guide your submission. Please contact info@sustainablect.org with specific questions.

1. Inclusive and Equitable Community Impacts

1.1 Optimize for Equity – REQUIRED

10 Points

Approved Information: 9.1 - Equity Toolkit for the East Norwalk Transit-Oriented Development Plan (10 points)

Supporting Documentation:

IMAGE: [9.1 QR CODE CARD 2.JPG](#)

IMAGE: [9.1 QR CODE CARD.JPG](#)

IMAGE: [9.1 VISION-WORKSHOP-SPANISH.JPG](#)

IMAGE: [9.1 VISION-WORKSHOP-ENGLISH.JPG](#)

PDF: [9.1 EQUITY TOOLKIT \(1\).PDF](#)

PDF: [9.1 CHANGEABLE COPY SIGN.PDF](#)

Additional Information: Link to East Norwalk TOD Plan: https://tomorrow.norwalkct.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/20200615_18500_ENW-TOD-Report_DRAFT_compressed.pdf Link to Appendix C Community Engagement: https://tomorrow.norwalkct.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/Appendix-C_Community-Engagement.pdf

2. Thriving Local Economies

2.1 Support Redevelopment of Brownfield Sites

15 Points

Approved Information: 1.1.1: Brownfield inventory (15 points), 2019

Supporting Documentation:

EXCEL: [1.1.1.BROWNFIELDSINVENTORY.XLSX](#)

Documentation Details: Attached is a list of the documented brownfields in Norwalk. This list is also included in the recently adopted Plan of Conservation and Development in detail.

Partners: CT DEEP's brownfields inventory

2.4 Provide Resources and Supports to Local Businesses

10 Points

Approved Information: "1.4.1 (5 points), 1.4.2 (5 points) In addition to the marketing and tourism promotion of South Norwalk, the City has a new Chief of Business and Economic Development. The Business and Economic Development Department has created a Small Business & Main Street Program that has a storefront improvement program, public art initiative and compacting trash bins that will all improve the area visually. These programs were developed recently by Sabrina Church who is the Director of Business Development and Tourism in Norwalk. Also attached are the advertisements for roundtables that were done with local business owners. Here is the link to the Small Business & Main Street program: <https://www.norwalkct.org/1881/Small-Business-Main-Street-Program>"

Supporting Documentation:

PDF: [STOREFRONT IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM](#)

PDF: [SMALL BUSINESS AND MAIN STREET PROGRAM](#)

EXCEL: [ROUNDTABLE BUSINESS INVENTORY](#)

PDF: [EAST NORWALK ROUNDTABLE FLIER](#)

PDF: [WEST AVE ROUNDTABLE FLIER](#)

PDF: [WEST AVE AGENDA](#)

Partners: None

3. Well-Stewarded Land and Natural Resources

3.1 Provide Watershed Education

5 Points

Approved Information: 2.1.2 Citizen Science (5 points)

Supporting Documentation:

PDF: [2.1.2 FAIRFIELD-COUNTY-RIVER-REPORT-2019.PDF](#)

IMAGE: [2.1.2 FAIRFIELD-COUNTY-RIVER-REPORT-2019 - NORWALK.GIF](#)

Documentation Details: The attached 2019 Fairfield County River Report was done by Harbor Watch which is a research and education program located in Westport. The report was funded in part by the City of Norwalk and monitored bacteria levels in 16 river watersheds, including Farm Creek, Silvermine River, Norwalk River and Saugatuck River. As part of the Harbor Watch study and ultimately the drafting of the Fairfield County River Report, the public is involved throughout the process including the collecting, sampling and monitoring of the rivers. As stated in the report, 60 high school and college students were trained as part of the 2019 report, making it an excellent opportunity for public involvement in environmental protection and as an educational opportunity for young adults (and the entire public!)

3.2 Create a Watershed Management Plan

30 Points

Approved Information: 2.2.1 Watershed Management Plan Inventory (10 points) 2.2.2 Regulation Review and Alignment with Watershed Protection Goals (10 points) 2.2.3 Action Plan (10 points)

Supporting Documentation:

PDF: [FIVEMILERIVER FINAL WBP.PDF](#)

PDF: [NORWALK WBP CHP5-7.PDF](#)

PDF: [SAUGATUCK RIVER WMP FINAL.PDF](#)

PDF: [NORWALK DRAINAGE MANUAL 2017.PDF](#)

PDF: [NORWALK-WBP-CHP1-4 - SUBWATERSHED AND HEADWATERS.PDF](#)

PDF: [NORWALK WBP CHP1-4.PDF](#)

PDF: [SAUGATUCK RIVER WATERSHED BASED PLAN - SOIL TYPES.PDF](#)

PDF: [2.2.1 WATER RESOURCES INVENTORY MAP.PDF](#)

WORD: [2.2 WATERSHED MANAGEMENT PLAN.DOCX](#)

Documentation Details: Narrative for this action is found in the Word document "2.2 Water management plans.doc". Links to full documents: East Norwalk TOD: https://tomorrow.norwalkct.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/20200615_18500_ENW-TOD-Report_DRAFT_compressed.pdf DPW Drainage Manual: <https://www.norwalkct.org/DocumentCenter/View/11484/Final-Drainage-Manual---4-27-2017?bidId=> Norwalk Watershed Plans: <https://www.norwalkct.org/1267/Norwalk-River-Watershed>

Partners: The City of Norwalk provides financial and personnel support to the Norwalk River Watershed Initiative (NRWI) and personnel support the Saugatuck River Watershed Partnership (SRWP) and the Five Mile River Watershed Action Group (Action Group). The NRWI is a collaborative partnership between the seven watershed municipalities, regional, state and federal government stakeholders, non-profit groups, and interested individuals with the goal of improving conditions throughout the watershed utilizing public outreach & education and implementation of action items. The NRWI has had a watershed Action Plan in place since 1998 and the City continues to be an active and financially supportive member. The Saugatuck Watershed Partnership was led by The Nature Conservancy, which brought together a large group of watershed stakeholders to identify key resources in need of protection and specific actions to curb negative impacts on those resources. The Five Mile River Group, currently not active, was a partnership between the City of Norwalk and a watershed neighborhood group. When active, the group pushed monthly public outreach and education to all neighborhood residents. Collaboration and participation with all of these partners has allowed the City to work together in many ways to ensure our watershed resources are considered during large-scale and small-scale decision making by the City and its citizens.

Additional Information: The multiple maps submitted for 2.2.1 show multiple aspects of the Saugatuck River Watershed, Five Mile River Watershed and Norwalk River Watershed in Norwalk, including headwaters, aquifers, land use and land cover, soil type and sub-watershed. For regulation review, the watershed management plans had a big impact on the adoption of the 2017 Norwalk Drainage Manual which is administered by the Department of Public Works. In the attached 2.2.2 Regulation Review, excerpts are taken from the Drainage Manual that show that the goals and objectives of the policy are a result of the watershed management plans that are in place today. Plans that are soon to be adopted by Norwalk like the East Norwalk TOD plan also place an emphasis on decreasing the amount of impervious surface in the city, which can help to prevent pollutants from running off into the Norwalk River and even the Saugatuck River Watershed. Actions listed in the Saugatuck River Watershed Plan include water quality monitoring, reducing impervious surfaces, restoring riparian buffers and land protection.

3.5 Create a Natural Resource and Wildlife Inventory

15 Points

Approved Information: 2.5.1 Natural Resource Inventory, (10 points), 2020 2.5.2 Use of NRI in Municipal Planning, (5 points), 2020

Supporting Documentation:

WORD: [NRI NARRATIVE & MAPS.DOCX](#)

PDF: [BASE MAP.PDF](#)

PDF: [COASTAL RESOURCE MAP.PDF](#)

PDF: [FLOOD HAZARD MAP.PDF](#)

PDF: [OFFICIAL IWW MAP 2010.PDF](#)

PDF: [REGULATED AREAS MAP.PDF](#)

PDF: [NORWALK WATER QUALITY CLASSIFICATIONS CT DEEP MAP.PDF](#)

PDF: [SOIL DRAINAGE CLASS MAP.PDF](#)

PDF: [8 AERIAL PHOTO.PDF](#)

Documentation Details: The narrative for this action is detailed in the Word document "NRI Narrative& maps". The maps referenced in the Appendix of the narrative are attached.

3.8 Implement Low Impact Development

15 Points

Approved Information: 2.8.1 Education Projects 2.8.1a Distribute educational materials on LID practices on town website (5 points) 2.8.2 Planning, Regulation and Policy 2.8.2a Include and encourage stormwater management and LID in POCD (5 points) 2.8.2b Encourage LID in town regulations (5 points) Norwalk is encouraging future projects to include low impact development which is a common theme in the 2019-2029 POCD. Attached are the relevant sections of the POCD as well as the business section of the zoning regulations which contains green infrastructure incentives for development such as green roofs, rain gardens, solar panels, etc. These regulations were updated as recently as June 2019. The city is also in the process of developing a transit-oriented development zone along East Avenue, near the East Norwalk Train Station, which will include more green and low impact development incentives. We hope to include that accomplishment in our next submission to Sustainable CT as we work towards our goal of sustainability. Low impact development is encouraged on Norwalk's Conservation Department page as well, which includes how households can implement ideas like rain barrels, rain gardens and permeable pavement to increase the amount of natural infiltration of precipitation and reduce runoff. Alexis Cherichetti is our Senior Environmental Officer and has done a tremendous job of informing residents of easily implementable conservation techniques.

Supporting Documentation:

PDF: [2.8.IMPLEMENTLOWIMPACTDEVELOPMENT_STORMWATER MANAGEMENT AND LID POCD.PDF](#)

PDF: [2.8 LID ZONING REGS .PDF](#)

PDF: [2.8 LID CONSERVATION PAGE.PDF](#)

Documentation Details: 2.8.1 POCD sections detailing stormwater management and low impact development goals and actions 2.8.1 Zoning regs encouraging low impact development as an incentive - pg. 33 and 34 Conservation page of Norwalk's city website with links to low impact development opportunities I know that the POCD is quite a large document, but I believe that entire section does an excellent job at showing how much importance was given to low impact development and pollution reduction in the 2019-2029 POCD.

Additional Information: Section 118-504E.2.d "Green Infrastructure"

3.9 Manage Woodlands and Urban Forests

10 Points

Approved Information: 2.9 Manage Woodlands and Forests (10 points)

Supporting Documentation:

PDF: [2.9.TREE MANAGEMENT PLAN.PDF](#)

PDF: [2.9.TREE ADVISORY AGENDA JULY 23 2019.PDF](#)

IMAGE: [2.9.TREEADVISORYCOMMITTEE.PNG](#)

IMAGE: [NORWALK TREE ALLIANCE MEMBERS](#)

Documentation Details: Norwalk Tree Alliance recent events page:

<https://www.thenorwalktreealliance.com/event-archive/> Norwalk Tree Advisory Committee page:

<https://www.norwalkct.org/1068/Tree-Advisory>

Partners: Norwalk Tree Alliance: <https://www.thenorwalktreealliance.com/> The Norwalk Tree Alliance is not a committee appointed by the Mayor but works directly with the City as volunteers to promote healthy trees in Norwalk.

4. Vibrant and Creative Cultural Ecosystems

4.2 Support Arts and Creative Culture

15 Points

Approved Information: 3.2.1 Support Arts and Creative Culture, 3.2.2, 3.2.3, 3.2.7 (15 points) The Norwalk Arts Commission is the leader in promoting arts and culture throughout Norwalk. The Arts Commission appointed Norwalk's first Poet Laureate in 2017, Laurel S. Peterson, and our current Poet Laureate is Bill P. Hayden. Norwalk promotes Arts and Culture through the Arts Commission page on the City website, which is a very active Commission in Norwalk. The Mayor has recommended that the MLK Blvd art project be fully funded for this upcoming fiscal year. The Arts Commission did not request any capital budget funds for the previous year, but will be funded for this upcoming fiscal year. Norwalk has also streamlined the permitting system for public events by holding meetings where anyone from the public that is looking to hold a public event can have their application signed off by all relevant departments. These meetings are set up by the Mayor's office and have a representative from the Planning and Zoning, Police, Fire, Public Works and Building departments attend. This prevents members from the public from having to travel from city hall to the police department and then to the fire department which are all in separate buildings.

Supporting Documentation:

[WHO WE ARE - NORWALK, CT - OFFICIAL WEBSITE.HTML](#)

[NORWALK-POET-LAUREATE.HTML](#)

PDF: [MAYOR'S RECOMMENDED BUDGET INCLUDES FUNDING ARTS COMMISSION](#)

Documentation Details: Who We Are - Norwalk Arts Commission members and mission statement
Norwalk Poet Laureate page News on Bill Hayden, Norwalk's Poet Laureate:
<https://www.norwalklib.org/729/Norwalk-Poet-Laureate> Link to Norwalk's Public Art Inventory (too large to attach as a file): <https://www.norwalkct.org/1799/Norwalk-Public-Art> Link to Public Murals and Traffic Graphic Programs: <https://www.norwalkct.org/1800/Public-Murals-Traffic-Graphic-Programs> Public Gathering instructions and application: <https://www.norwalkct.org/DocumentCenter/View/7379/Revised-2019-Special-Event-Form?bidId=>

5. Dynamic and Resilient Planning

5.1 Integrate Sustainability into Plan of Conservation and Development

40 Points

Approved Information: 4.1.b POCD Sustainability Concepts (40 points), POCD adopted December 2019

Supporting Documentation:

PDF: [4.1 INTEGRATE SUSTAINABILITY INTO POCD AND ZONING.PDF](#)

PDF: [WORKSHEET 4.1B.PDF](#)

PDF: [ACTION 4.1 WORKSHEET A.DOCX.PDF](#)

Documentation Details: The following documents list how each of the sustainability concepts were integrated into the Norwalk 2019-2029 POCD. The POCD heavily focused on both smart growth and sustainable land development through preserving existing environmental resources. The East Norwalk TOD was our selected project to implement the Equity Toolkit for section 9.1 - The East Norwalk TOD Plan will be an amendment to the POCD and act as the guiding document for development in East Norwalk.

Additional Information: Here is the link to the Norwalk POCD since it is too large to attach:

<https://tomorrow.norwalkct.org/wp-content/uploads/Norwalk-Citywide-Plan.pdf> Page numbers for each of the concepts are included in worksheet 4.1b Link to the East Norwalk TOD Plan:

https://tomorrow.norwalkct.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/20200615_18500_ENW-TOD-Report_DRAFT_compressed.pdf

5.4 Assess Climate Vulnerability

10 Points

Approved Information: 4.4.1 Hazard Mitigation Plan (10 points) Norwalk is a coastal community and is therefore vulnerable to sea level rise caused by climate change. Therefore vulnerability and resiliency were important topics throughout the 2019-2029 POCD and include drafting a climate action plan specific to Norwalk in the future. The Planning and Zoning Office has adjusted its staff to include a Land Use Planner to work on environmental issues facing the city and the department has taken many steps towards sustainability through regulation changes created by the Director of Planning and Zoning.

Supporting Documentation:

PDF: [4.4.ASSESSCLIMATEVULNERABILITY_HMP-2016-WESTCOG-SOUTH-EXECUTIVE-SUMMARY.PDF](#)

PDF: [4.4.2.ASSESSCLIMATEVULNERABILITY_SECTIONSOFPOCD.PDF](#)

Partners: We are part of West COG's Regional Hazard Mitigation Plan

6. Clean and Diverse Transportation Systems and Choices

6.2 Promote Effective Parking Management

20 Points

Approved Information: 5.2.2.b Promote Effective Parking Management (20 points) As Norwalk is in the process of updating the zoning regulations, parking minimums have been reduced in the downtown areas of the city which include South Norwalk and the Central Business Design District along West Avenue and Wall Street. The Planning and Zoning Department is also working on an East Avenue Transit Oriented Development District which will contain shared parking between adjacent properties. Norwalk has reduced minimum parking requirements from 2.0 spaces per residential unit in a multifamily dwelling to 1.3 parking spaces per unit. In the downtown areas the city has also reduced the parking minimums from 1 space/200 square feet of retail space to 1 space/1000 square feet of retail space. Also in the South Norwalk Business District and Central Business District, if the required parking cannot be physically met, a fee-in-lieu of parking can be paid to the city. The city then uses these funds to provide parking in parking garages that are strategically located in the downtown areas of Norwalk. Properties in Norwalk that are in the downtown areas and within 1000 feet of a public parking facility are also exempt from providing parking.

Supporting Documentation:

PDF: [5.2.2.B PARKING.PDF](#)

Documentation Details: 5.2.2.b Fee in lieu of parking is on page 11 and the parking exemption for downtown properties is on page 7.

7. Renewable and Efficient Energy Infrastructure and Operations

7.3 Achieve High Energy Performance for Individual Buildings

5 Points

Approved Information: 6.3.2 Achieve High Energy Performance for Individual Buildings (5 points) Achieve LEED Silver (or higher) certification for at least one municipal/Board of Education building. The Norwalk Fire Headquarters is a LEED Gold certified building that was constructed in 2014.

Supporting Documentation:

PDF: [6.3 ACHIEVE HIGH ENERGY PERFORMANCE FOR INDIVIDUAL BUILDINGS.PDF](#)

PDF: [6.3.2 NORWALK FIRE DEPT SCORECARD.PDF](#)

Additional Information: <https://www.usgbc.org/projects/norwalk-fire-headquarters>

9. Strategic Materials Management

9.3 Recycle Additional Materials and Compost Organics

10 Points

Approved Information: 7.7 Recycle Additional Materials and Compost Organics (10 points)

Supporting Documentation:

PDF: [7.7 AND 7.8.2 COMPOSTING PROGRAM - REVISIONS--NORWALK.PDF](#)

Documentation Details: The attached document is showing the Norwalk city website which details the food scrap recycling program.

Additional Information: There is no official contract with a private company for food scraps recycling but since the program first began in July we have composted almost 20,000lbs in food scraps. The continued success of the program will hopefully lead to a formal contract with a private company as the volume exceeds what the City can accommodate as well as Health Department inclusion in the process. Comment:

11. Healthy, Efficient and Diverse Housing

11.2 Grow Sustainable and Affordable Housing Options

50 Points

Approved Information: 8.2.1 Affordable Housing Appeals List (10 points) 8.2.2 increased Affordable Housing by 1.32 percentage points (40 points) The City of Norwalk has increased the percentage of affordable units in the city from 11.83% in 2014 to 12.75% in 2018 and most currently to 13.15% in 2019. Norwalk requires that any developments over 20 units in most areas and 12 units in the downtown areas include workforce housing units and is looking at lowering that threshold to be any development over 10 units. This will allow the city to further expand the amount of newly constructed affordable units in Norwalk which are in high demand. Another theme in the 2019-2029 POCD is to provide diverse housing options and to encourage mixed-income developments in the city. Given the housing shortage that is nationwide, Norwalk's Planning & Zoning and Fair Housing Departments have been very proactive in providing equitable housing options for all income levels, and the city is continuing to provide affordable housing units. All documents attached are submitted for 8.2.1 and 8.2.2

Supporting Documentation:

PDF: [8.2.GROWSUSTAINABLEANDAFFORDABLEHOUSINGOPTIONS_FINALAPPEALSSUMMARY2014PDF.PDF](#)

PDF: [8.2.GROWSUSTAINABLEANDAFFORDABLEHOUSINGOPTIONS_FINAL-APPEALS-SUMMARY-2018.PDF](#)

PDF: [WORKFORCE HOUSING REGS](#)

PDF: [2019 AFFORDABLE HOUSING APPEALS LIST.PDF](#)