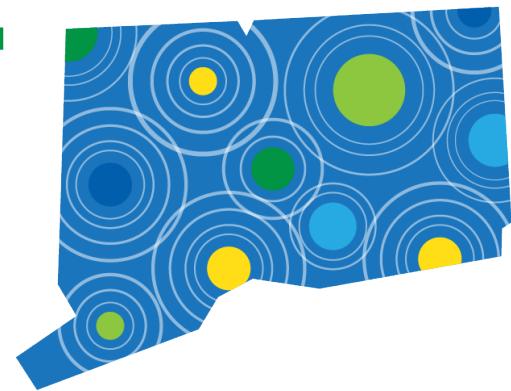


# Sustainable CT

Local Actions. Statewide Impact.



2020 Guide

## Sustainable CT Overview

Thank you for your interest in Sustainable CT! With a shared vision across Connecticut, practical tools, and a collaborative spirit, your municipality is helping to build a thriving state for all residents—today and tomorrow.

## What is Sustainable CT?

Sustainable CT is a voluntary certification program to recognize thriving and resilient Connecticut municipalities. An independently funded, grassroots, municipal effort, Sustainable CT provides a wide-ranging, flexible menu of best practices. Municipalities choose Sustainable CT actions, implement them, and earn points toward certification. Sustainable CT provides opportunities for funding and technical support to help communities implement actions that promote economic well-being and enhance equity, all while respecting the finite capacity of the natural environment. The program is designed to support all Connecticut municipalities, regardless of size, geography or resources. Sustainable CT empowers municipalities to create high collective impact for current and future residents.

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## Why Participate?

- **Recognition.** Put your municipality on the map for its existing sustainability successes.
- **Inspiration.** Inspire other municipalities with your stories and accomplishments.
- **Peer Learning.** Be part of a vibrant, locally-driven network to accelerate the exchange of information, materials and best practices.
- **Innovation.** Be part of a learning laboratory that drives innovation.
- **Funding and Other Resources.** Leverage existing funding, access opportunities for new funding, and connect with our Sustainable CT Fellowship Program to support local sustainability action.
- **Economic Benefit.** Demonstrate your municipality's commitment to sustainability. Businesses and potential residents may be more likely to locate in your community, growing the local tax base.

- **Partnerships.** Connect with partners—like other municipalities, regional entities, business and nonprofits—to create synergies and alignment with existing, data-driven efforts.
  - **Community Building.** Through our uniform platform across municipalities, engage community stakeholders, increasing ownership, legitimacy and support for sustainability action.
  - **Track Data.** Utilize our framework to track your municipality's progress on specific sustainability indicators.
  - **The Future.** Current and future residents depend on forward-looking, local action now to ensure vibrant economies and healthy, resilient communities in the future.
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## How to Participate

Sustainable CT is open to all cities and towns in Connecticut. The program is voluntary and participation is free. There is no time limit to certification; you may work through the program at your own pace. Below are the steps to certification.

- [Pass a resolution](#). The resolution outlines your city or town's intent to seek certification through Sustainable CT and establishes a [Sustainability Team](#) that will implement program actions. You may use or edit a template, or you can write your own.
  - Designate a municipal contact person. This person must be an elected official or a municipal employee and will [register your community](#) on the Sustainable CT website.
  - [Complete actions](#) and track them on your Municipal Dashboard.
  - Once you have completed actions to meet the requirements for either Bronze or Silver certification, [submit for certification](#) through your Municipal Dashboard. Contact [certify@sustainablect.org](mailto:certify@sustainablect.org) for assistance with completing actions and applying for certification.
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## 2020 Certification Requirements

The Sustainable CT certification process promotes friendly competition and cooperation among towns, while also incentivizing regional actions that can take impact to scale. Application for certification is rolling, and early submission is encouraged. **Certification lasts for 3 years.**<sup>1</sup>

There are two levels of certification offered: Bronze & Silver. You must complete one action from each of the 9 [action categories](#) to receive either **Bronze or Silver** certification (actions categories described in the next section). Many Sustainable CT actions have variable points, which means there are several ways to complete the action. All you need to do is achieve one of the designated point levels listed for that action to consider it complete. Of course, the more you do, the more points you earn. In addition to completing one action in each of the 9 Sustainable CT categories, you must achieve at least 200 points for Bronze certification and 400 points for Silver. You must also complete 1 Equity Toolkit in action 9.1 Optimize for Equity to achieve bronze certification, or 3 Equity Toolkits in action 9.1 Optimize for Equity to achieve silver.

### ➤ 2020 **Bronze** Certification Requirements



- Complete at least **1 action** in each of the 9 categories.
- Complete 1 Equity Toolkit in action 9.1 Optimize for Equity.
- Successfully complete actions totaling **200 or more points**.

### ➤ 2020 **Silver** Certification Requirements



- Complete at least **1 action** in each of the 9 categories.
- Complete 3 Equity Toolkits in action 9.1 Optimize for Equity
- Successfully complete actions totaling **400 or more points**.

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<sup>1</sup> Actions, points, and certification point thresholds are for **2020** and may change for future certification cycles.

## Sustainable CT: Action Categories

In order to achieve either Bronze or Silver certification, you must complete one action from each of the 9 categories listed below:

- 1. Thriving local economies:** supports local businesses, increases local jobs and revenues, and fosters energy-efficient and renewable energy-powered commercial and industrial buildings.
- 2. Well-stewarded land and natural resources:** establishes policies and practices that recognize our finite resources and that strive to achieve a balance of many users while preserving and increasing ecosystem health and resilience.
- 3. Vibrant and creative cultural ecosystems:** distinctive, engaged and livable communities that shape people-centered places, provide robust artistic and cultural opportunities, and consider environmental impacts.
- 4. Dynamic and resilient planning:** balances human development and resource use with a wide range of factors, including livability, economic opportunity, biodiversity and natural systems.
- 5. Clean and diverse transportation systems and choices:** allows enhanced health, safety and access for all roadway users—including motor vehicles, pedestrians, bicyclists and transit users—regardless of age, ability, income or ethnicity.
- 6. Efficient physical infrastructure and operations:** includes accessible municipal buildings with efficient operations, maintenance, and energy systems.
- 7. Strategic and inclusive public services:** encompasses transparency, inclusivity, effective communication, appropriate events and training, materials management, and public health.
- 8. Healthy housing options:** diverse in both type and affordability, with efficient and renewable energy systems and located in thriving, livable, connected neighborhoods.
- 9. Inclusive and equitable community impacts:** deeply embeds equity considerations into municipal operations, building inclusiveness, community cohesion, and shared decision-making.

## Key Dates for 2020 Certification

If you choose to apply for certification in 2020, please note the key dates below. For submission dates, materials must be received no later than 12:00 p.m. Contact [info@sustainablect.org](mailto:info@sustainablect.org) for more information.

- **April 28, 2020:** Final submission deadline for the spring 2020 certification cycle. If certification is not achieved in the spring cycle, feedback on actions completed can be used to make revisions for submission in the fall 2020 certification cycle. Municipalities whose application is not yet complete may still submit partially completed materials to receive feedback.
- **By mid-June 2020:** Final decisions on spring 2020 certification released by Sustainable CT.
- **August 25, 2020:** Final submission deadline for the fall 2020 certification cycle. If certification is not achieved in the fall cycle, feedback on actions can be used to make revisions for submission in the spring 2021 certification cycle. Municipalities whose application is not yet completed may still submit partially completed materials to receive feedback.
- **By early November 2020:** Final decisions on fall certification released by Sustainable CT.

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## Action Benefits

Sustainable CT is made up of actions, which are essentially sustainability best practices. The actions included in the program were decided upon and designed by representatives from Connecticut cities and towns, nonprofits, academia, businesses, and the general public. Every Sustainable CT action can produce multiple benefits to a community, depicted by the following icons:



### Environmental Impacts

Cleaner air and water, and enhanced preservation of land and natural resources.



## Greenhouse Gas Reductions

Reduced greenhouse gas emissions.



## Health and Wellness

Optimal health and wellness for all residents.



## Cost Savings

Cost savings to your municipal budget and operations.



## Economic Well-Being

Stability and growth for local businesses, and job retention and creation.



## Climate Resilience

Improved ability of your community to anticipate, adapt and flourish in the face of disruption.



## Community Building

Enhanced connection of your residents to your local community, engaged partnership to improve your community, and enhanced resident awareness.



## Equity

New, improved, and valued relationships between different members of your community. More inclusive decision-making and improved access to services and sharing of benefits with all residents - current and future - regardless of race, income, ability, age, gender, sexual orientation, etc.

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## Sustainable CT: Join Us!

While Sustainable CT is a municipal certification program, there are many ways to get involved, regardless of your interests.

- **Individuals:** Volunteer to help your town with Sustainable CT actions as a member of your sustainability team. [View participating communities](#) to see if your municipality has already established a Sustainability Team.
- **Non-Profits:** Does your non-profit support local economies, arts, culture, equity, mobility (including public transit, biking and walking), health, housing, agriculture, forestry, open space, clean energy, natural resources, smart growth, green buildings, environmental protection, community engagement, or other goals aligned with Sustainable CT actions? If so, contact [info@sustainablect.org](mailto:info@sustainablect.org) to see how you can help towns implement actions and earn points toward Sustainable CT certification. You can also make a donation to [support](#) Sustainable CT projects in our communities.
- **Businesses:** Show your commitment to your community by becoming a [Sustainable CT sponsor](#). Sustainable CT sponsorship ensures that the communities where you live and work can continue to realize the benefits of the Sustainable CT program. We have a range of options for sponsorship, including our highly popular [Fellowship Program](#), all of which provide high visibility to engaged citizens and decision makers across the State.
- **Philanthropy:** The Sustainable CT program empowers municipalities to create high collective impact for current and future residents across a range of [issue areas](#). We work with philanthropic partners to develop and implement programming that leverages our strong platform and partnerships to enable state-wide progress. Reach out to explore how Sustainable CT can help you realize your philanthropic goals.
- **Colleges & Universities:** Partner with Sustainable CT by helping to recruit and support students to participate in our [Fellowship Program](#). You can also perform research, collaborate with us on campus, or become a Sustainable CT sponsor.



If you have any questions about Sustainable CT, please contact [info@sustainablect.org](mailto:info@sustainablect.org) or call 860-465-0258.

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