

Title

City of Hyattsville's Participation in the University of Maryland's Environmental Finance Center (EFC) – Sustainable Maryland Certified Designation Program

Motion #

178-09-11

Recommendation

I move that the Mayor and Council authorize the Director of Community and Economic Development to register the City for the University of Maryland's Environmental Finance Center (EFC) – Sustainable Maryland Certified designation program and task members of the City's existing Environmental, Planning and Bike-Pedestrian Safety Committee, to serve as the City's designated "Green Team". The Green Team will be responsible for pursuing actions to qualify the City for Sustainable Maryland Certified designation, including the attendance at training sessions and drafting of an action plan to be presented to the Mayor and Council for adoption.

Submitted By

Hiles

Department

Community Development

Background

Staff has provided a memorandum outlining the designation and program materials.

Anticipated Staff Resources Required to Implement

City Staff will participate in the coordination of Green Team activities and distribution of materials, as part of assigned Committee Liaison responsibilities.

City Administrator - Department Director Comments

Recommend Approval

Strategic Goals and Actions

Goal 2 – Ensure the Long-Term Health of the City Action 2.2 – Apply energy-efficient practices to City operations, facilities, and equipment

Current Year Budget Impact

Approval of this item will not have any direct impact on the adopted FY12 City Budget.



Memo

To: Mayor and City Council
Gregory Rose, City Administrator

From: Jim Chandler, Community Development Manager

Date: September 8, 2011

Re: Sustainable Maryland Certified Designation

The purpose of this memorandum is to provide the Mayor and Council with a briefing of the University of Maryland's Environmental Finance Center (EFC) – Sustainable Maryland Certified designation.

Summary

I attended a workshop introducing and outlining the program on June 26, 2011 at the Maryland Municipal League Annual Conference. The Sustainable Maryland Certification is a voluntary designation for municipalities in Maryland that want to go "green". The designation was developed by the University of Maryland's Environmental Finance Center (EFC) in partnership with the MML, Town Creek Foundation and U.S. EPA and is modeled from New Jersey's Sustainable Certified Program. Additional program details are attached and can be located on the organization's website at: www.sustainablemaryland.com.

The program is intended to provide municipalities with a framework of actionable policies and documentation of local actions through the awarding of points for completed actions of best practices in resources including water, energy, planning, health, food, and economy. This designation does not require a financial commitment from the City, and is not intended to provide the City with access to new direct or indirect funding, but would serve as a profile public relations piece that capitalizes on previous and on-going local sustainability efforts. This designation is separate from the State of Maryland Department of Housing & Community Development (DHCD) Sustainable Communities Designation, which is currently under review for approval by the Governor's Smart Growth Sub-Cabinet. There is substantial overlap in the two designations, with the difference being the DHCD designation is intended to

provide access to State program funding, while the EFC designation is intended more as a “grassroots” action plan which builds upon existing sustainability efforts.

In order to be approved as a Sustainable Maryland Certified community, municipalities must acquire a total of 150 points through the completion of specific Action Items outlined in the attached score card. The program includes two mandatory Action Items, which are the creation of a Green Team (10 points) and the development and adoption of a Green Team Action Plan (10 points). The program awards 20 points to municipalities certified under Maryland DHCD’s Sustainable Communities Designation.

Due to several factors, including both current workloads, City priorities and the number of vacant positions, the City may elect to withhold participation in this program and re-evaluate participation at a later date, as unlike the Maryland DHCD designation, it does not appear that designation in this program during the inaugural cycle provides any strategic advantage to the City. However, if the City intends on participating in this program during this designation cycle, it is necessary that several actions be taken immediately to authorize participation.

Required Actions

1. The Mayor and Council appoint members of an existing committee(s), most likely either the Environmental Committee and/or Planning Committee, and/or Bicycle-Pedestrian Safety Committee, to serve as the City’s Green Team and direct action.
2. City Staff will register the City of Hyattsville on the EFC website at: <http://www.sustainablemaryland.com/>
3. Members of the Green Team will be tasked with attendance at the mandatory Green Team training and drafting of a Green Team action plan. The first Green Team training session will take place on Saturday, September 24, 2011, 1:00 – 4:00 pm at Local Government Insurance Trust (LGIT) Headquarters in Hanover, MD. Not all members of the Green Team are required to attend.
4. The Action Plan will document existing City operations and community projects which qualify as Action Items and also include recommendations on the implementation of additional Action Items.
5. The Action Plan will be drafted and presented to the Mayor and City Council in Spring 2012 for adoption.
6. The Action Plan and application will be submitted to the EFC for review and approval.
7. The Green Team will be responsible for the annual updating and benchmarking of Action Plan items.

Staff Recommendation

City Staff recommends the City’s pursuit of Sustainable Maryland Certified designation primarily because the City is uniquely positioned to participate in this program and receive designation because many of the accredited Action Plan items are already being implemented in the community, in addition:

1. The City has two standing and active volunteer committees whose mission are focused on sustainability actions, tasking the members with the development of this work plan will provide a focused and functionally purposeful agenda for these committee’s for the next 6 – 8 months;
2. The City recently adopted and submitted the 2011 – 2015 Community Sustainability Plan which, if approved by the State, would provide the City for moving forward with many of the additional Action Items;

3. The development of an Action Plan would provide a benchmarking tool for the implementation and management of the City's adopted Sustainability Policy;
4. There is no financial commitment required for the City to pursue designation, furthermore any future proposed actions would require the approval of the City Council through the approval of both the adopted action plan and subsequent budgeting of funds.



Frequently Asked Questions - Summer 2011

GENERAL OVERVIEW

- **What is Sustainable Maryland Certified?**

Sustainable Maryland Certified is a certification program for municipalities in Maryland who want to go green, control costs and save money, and take steps to sustain their quality of life over the long term.

- **What does the program offer municipalities?**

SMC helps communities choose a direction for their greening efforts; complete their chosen actions with help from program tools, trainings, case studies, and other resources; and be recognized for their accomplishments. The program provides a menu of actions a municipality can take to work towards sustainability. It offers a one-stop shop for communities wanting to become sustainable; what to do and how to do it. It links to or creates incentives for municipalities that are making progress toward the certification actions.

- **Will municipalities get recognition for achieving certification?**

The certification is a prestigious designation for municipal governments in Maryland. Municipalities that achieve the certification are considered by their peers, by state government, by experts and civic organizations in Maryland, to be among the leading municipalities in their quest for sustainability. Municipalities that complete the certification requirements will be recognized at an annual awards event held at the Maryland Municipal League Conference in October.

- **Is the State of Maryland going to mandate participation in Sustainable Maryland Certified?**

No. The program is strictly voluntary.

- **What does sustainability or sustainable development mean?**

It means meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. (UN World Commission on Environment and Development) In short, it means preserving our civilization and the things we hold dear in perpetuity while enhancing our quality of life.

- **How is the Sustainable Maryland Certified certification different from other “green” certification programs (such as ICLEI, Main Street Maryland, EPA Green Communities, LEED, Green Schools, Clean Currents Neighborhood Challenge, etc.)?**

Sustainable Maryland Certified does not focus on just one issue, like curbing global warming. Our program encompasses a range of issues including global warming, energy, pollution, land use, air and water quality, equity, local living economies, sustainable agriculture, health, green buildings, transportation, and more. Also, the Sustainable Maryland Certified program was developed specifically for Maryland municipalities, so the actions, tools, and incentives directly apply to the needs of Maryland communities. The program is FREE and may serve as an entry point for municipalities who are just beginning to navigate the process of becoming more sustainable.

- **Why is equity included in Sustainable Maryland Certified as a part of sustainability?**

The body of literature and practice in this area indicates that sustainability includes working to “do no harm” to any sector of the population while also creating benefits for portions of the population who may, traditionally, have had limited opportunities in the community. This includes those facing disparities in health, wellness, the availability of goods and services, and transportation access, particularly when the disparity is based, intentionally or not, upon race, class, ethnicity, age, income, and/or disability. Inequity fundamentally impacts a community’s ability to be resilient.

- **Who are the Sustainable Maryland Certified project partners?**

The program is an initiative of the University of Maryland Environmental Finance Center (EFC), Maryland Municipal League (MML), and the National Center for Smart Growth (NCSG), along with a coalition of Maryland non-profit organizations, state and regional government agencies, academic institutions, business leaders, and experts in related fields.

Funding for this project was provided by the US Environmental Protection Agency and Town Creek Foundation.

- **How can I get a hardcopy of all program materials?**

The program materials are predominantly web-based; however, each action is provided in PDF format that can be downloaded and printed.

- **Can someone speak about Sustainable Maryland Certified at our event?**

To request a Sustainable Maryland Certified speaker, contact info@sustainablemaryland.com or 301-405-7956. We cannot guarantee speakers, but will do our best to accommodate your needs.

ABOUT CERTIFICATION

• What are the levels of certification?

Sustainable Maryland Certified will have one level of certification in its first year. To achieve certification, municipalities will need to complete actions worth a total of 150 points (including two mandatory actions and two of six priority actions) and submit the appropriate documents as evidence that the SMC requirements have been satisfied. In year two it is anticipated that SMC will add additional a level of certification and eventually move toward Bronze, Silver and Gold levels. Those certified in Year 1 will move to Bronze level certification and can work towards achieving the Silver level.

• What are the program actions that municipalities must achieve in order to be certified?

Actions are the concrete steps municipalities can take to become more green and sustainable. To achieve certification, municipalities will need to complete actions worth a total of 150 points (including two mandatory actions and two of six priority actions) and submit the appropriate documents as evidence that the SMC requirements have been satisfied. Currently the program has identified more than 60 actions, totaling more than 700 points, a municipality can choose from to reach the minimum points required for certification. Actions include ordinances, programs, policies and procedures, facility improvements, and community outreach and education. Each action comes with detailed resources and step-by-step “how to” directions.

• How do you become certified?

To achieve certification, municipalities will need to register and then complete actions worth a total of 150 points (including two mandatory actions and two of six priority actions) and submit the appropriate documents as evidence that the SMC requirements have been satisfied. The 6 Priority Actions include: Community Gardens, Municipal Energy Audits, Municipal Carbon Footprint, Green Purchasing Policy, Watershed Plan, and Stormwater Management Plan.

All actions taken by municipalities to score points toward certification must be accompanied by documentary evidence and will be reviewed by the project partners. Only efforts that meet the standards described in the actions will be accepted and counted toward certification.

For step by step instructions on how to register and upload submission requirements, please refer to [Getting Started](#).

- **Who created the actions?**

To create rigorous and broadly accepted standards and actions, Sustainable Maryland Certified convened task forces comprised of leaders from academia, non-profit organizations, the business community, and state and local government. The task forces researched and disseminated best practices, translated global and state imperatives into local actions, tested sustainability planning models, and developed community resources for the program.

- **Are the actions flexible? Can we vary certain aspects and still get credit?**

Only efforts that meet the submission requirements described in the actions will be accepted and counted toward certification. Submission requirements are listed for each action. All actions taken by municipalities to score points toward certification must be accompanied by documentary evidence and will be reviewed by project partners. Realizing SMC Task Forces could not possibly develop or come up with every possible action item and that some municipalities are engaged in pioneering projects, SMC has provided an **Innovative Demonstration Project** action item in each category. If a municipality has taken on a project not covered under an existing action item, it may contact SMC to see if the project would qualify for points as an Innovative Demonstration Project. If you have a project you would like to have considered, please contact info@sustainablemaryland.com or 301-405-7956.

- **Can you get points/credit for actions that were already completed before beginning the certification process?**

Yes, actions taken by municipalities that have been completed in the past year can count toward your certification total. For example, if you have had a local food fair in the past year, then you can count this action and score 10 points. In some cases, the submission requirements for an action completed in the past may exceed one year. Please check with Sustainable Maryland Certified program staff. An application for certification must be accompanied by documentary evidence and will be reviewed by the project partners.

- **What if a municipality already has a green team or sustainability/environment committee?**

Some communities may already have a Green Team-like entity in place. It may be possible for an existing entity to serve as the municipality's Green Team provided that the composition of the team is expanded or adjusted to reflect Sustainable Maryland Certified's diversity goals. It may be necessary for existing entities to expand their membership as well as their mission in order to qualify as a Green Team under the Sustainable Maryland Program. (Note: Such entities can go by any name but the role is the same: lead and coordinate the sustainability activities of the community.)

- **Is Sustainable Maryland Certified interested in our frustrations or challenges dealing with agencies, existing laws, or other obstacles?**

Yes, please share your challenges, frustrations, experiences, as well as any possible solutions. We hope to identify problem areas for meeting future sustainability goals. We are also interested in your success stories in order to share them with other municipalities and the greater community. Please contact info@sustainablemaryland.com or 301-405-7956.

GUIDANCE AND TOOLS FOR MUNICIPALITIES

- **What are the project tools?**

Each action has resources and tools to guide you. For example, the Energy Audits for Municipal Facilities (or Municipal Carbon Footprint) section contains a condensed version of the Maryland Department of Environmental Protection's guide to performing energy audits, guidance on whom to involve, project costs, a schedule, a sample Request for Proposal, sample cover letters, an overview of a success story, and a list of qualified Maryland vendors.

- **Can we get guidance as we go along?**

Registration in the program provides you with access to Sustainable Maryland Certified workshops, trainings, and a resource center. The website provides all of the details you need to submit for each action. If you have questions as you work toward certification, we are here to help you. Please contact info@sustainablemaryland.com or 301-405-7956.

REGISTRATION AND CERTIFICATION

- **How do you register?**

In order to register, the municipality must first pass a resolution, ordinance or proclamation or draft a formal letter stating its intent to pursue Sustainable Maryland certification. The municipality must also designate a formal contact person to take charge of the process. If necessary, the contact person may be changed at a later time. Click [here](#) for a sample resolution.

Once the resolution, ordinance or proclamation is adopted or a formal letter drafted, create a pdf or jpg of it to upload during the registration process. Go to www.sustainablemaryland.com and click "*Register Your Municipality*". Complete the registration form and upload the adopted municipal resolution, ordinance, proclamation or letter.

For step by step instructions on how to register please refer to [Getting Started](#).

- **Who is eligible to be listed as the primary or secondary contact responsible for municipal registration?**

While the contacts are typically municipal staff, elected officials, or other municipal representatives, other people may serve in this capacity as long as they are authorized by the governing body to do so. The municipal resolution stating the town's intent to pursue certification in the Sustainable [Maryland Certified](#) program can designate a point of contact responsible for registering the municipality and managing the account. Please see the sample [resolution](#).

- **What happens after a municipality registers?**

After the registration is submitted, it will be reviewed and approved in 1 to 3 days. The municipality will then receive an email at the primary contact's address that contains a **User ID and Password**. Use this information to access the Community Profile on the Sustainable Maryland [website](#) by clicking "Log In".

- **Can I change my password or contact information once registered?**

Yes, once your registration is approved, use the log in information from your confirmation email to access your town's Community Profile page. On the opening page, use the "edit account t(change password)" link to change your profile.

After making changes to your Community Contact or Password, click "Update" at the bottom of the Community Profile page.

To change your User ID click "Check It" next to the ID, type a new User ID, and click "Check", then click "Use This" and lastly "Update" at the bottom of the community Profile page.

- **Can entities other than municipalities (such as counties, unincorporated areas, and sewage authorities) register for Sustainable Maryland Certified?**

Sustainable Maryland Certified is only available to municipal governments; however representatives of other entities may participate through the Green Team or collaborative activities with the municipal government.

- **Once registered, will municipalities be able to see what other communities are working on for certification?**

Sustainable Maryland Certified will list all registered municipalities on the website. When you register you will be asked if your municipality is willing to share your certification documentation with other municipalities and the public. Sharing is important, because we hope that municipalities will find ways to work together. For example, if you see that the towns around you plan to establish a green purchasing program, you could collaborate by doing joint contracts. Or if a municipality does not have the funds to employ a Stormwater Manager, it may reach out to municipalities in the area to share the position and cost.

• What is the deadline for applying for the certification and how long does the certification last?

Municipalities may apply for certification at any time. Applications will be reviewed and approved on a rolling basis. The certification is good for three years from the time it is approved and the municipality is notified.

• Will the certification standards become more rigorous in future years?

Only one level of certification is being offered in Year 1. In future years, more levels of certification, connoting more progress toward sustainability, will be offered. . In year two it is anticipated that SMC will add additional a level of certification and eventually move toward Bronze, Silver and Gold levels. Those certified in Year 1 will move to Bronze level certification and can work towards achieving the Silver or Gold level.

Municipalities wishing to renew their certification after three years will have to make additional progress.

GRANTS AND INCENTIVES

• Where can we find information about other grants and funding available?

As grants and other funding become available through this program, information will be posted on the website under [Grants & Resources](#).

MORE INFORMATION

For questions contact:

info@sustainablemaryland.com

T: 301-405-7956

Visit the Web site: www.SustainableMaryland.com

Actions for Sustainable Communities:

To become Sustainable Maryland Certified, municipalities must complete and document actions from the list below. To achieve certification, municipalities will need to complete actions worth a total of 150 points (including two mandatory actions and two of six priority* actions) and submit the appropriate documents as evidence that the SMC requirements have been satisfied.

ACTION ITEM	POINTS
COMMUNITY ACTION	
Green Team	
Participate in SMC Green Team Training	5
Create a Green Team	10 M
Complete a Green Team Action Plan	10 M
Conduct Community Barriers and Benefits Assessment	15
Build SMC Resource Center	5
Participation in MD Green Schools	10
Innovative Demonstration Projects	5 to 20
COMMUNITY BASED FOOD SYSTEM	
Local Food Consumption	
Local Food Fair	10
Local Food Consumption & Preservation Classes	5 per class
Establish Local Farmers Market	15
Promote Local Farmers Market	5
Local Food Production	
Community Gardens	15*
Spring Transplant Sale	10
Fall Transplant Sale	10
Establish CSA Drop-off Location	10
Innovative Demonstration Projects	5 to 20
ENERGY	
Municipal Energy Audits	10 (1st bldg), 5 (consec bldgs)*
Residential Energy Efficiency	5 to 25+
Wind Energy Project	15
Innovative Demonstration Projects	5 to 20
GREENHOUSE GAS	
Municipal Carbon Footprint (pre-requisite)	15 *
Community Carbon Footprint (pre-requisite)	15
Climate Planning	
Climate Action Plan	10 to 25+
Climate Change Adaptation Element	5
Innovative Demonstration Projects	5 to 20
HEALTH & WELLNESS	
Let's Move	15
Workplace Wellness	
Join Healthiest Maryland Businesses	5
Workplace Wellness Program	5 to 15
Living Well Program	5 per class
Innovative Demonstration Projects	5 to 20
LOCAL ECONOMIES	
Buy Local	
Establish Local Business Directory	10
Promote Local Business Directory	5
Buy Local Campaign	15
Local Business Roundtable	5 per roundtable
Local Business Procurement Notices	10
Economic Analysis of Procurement Practices	15
Local Purchasing Preference Policy	10
Green Business Recognition	
Join Maryland Green Registry	5
Promote Maryland Green Registry	5 points per 2 businesses

ACTION ITEM	POINTS
LOCAL ECONOMIES (CONTINUED)	
Green Business Certification Program	15
Green Purchasing	
Green Purchasing Policy (pre-requisite)	15*
Evaluate Current Purchasing Practices (pre-requisite)	10
Vendor Preference Statement (pre-requisite)	10
Purchase Recycled Products	10
Purchase Environmentally Preferable Products	10
Implement Waste Reduction Program	10
Innovative Demonstration Projects	5 to 20
NATURAL RESOURCES	
Watershed Stewardship	
Implement Watershed Stewardship/Pollution Prevention Outreach Program(s)	10
Facilitate Engagement in Existing Watershed Stewardship Opportunities	5 per event
Provide Voluntary Opportunities for Citizen Engagement in Watershed Stewardship	10
Provide Incentives for Watershed Stewardship on Private Lands	15
Create a Watershed Plan	20*
Stormwater Management	
Stormwater Management Program	15*
Stormwater Manager/Coordinator	15
Stormwater Fee Structure	20
Septic Management	
Septics System Assessment and Inventory	15
Septics System Management Plan	20
Dedicated Septic System Fund	20
Water Conservation	
Develop a Water Conservation Plan	15
Develop a Water Conservation Outreach Program	10
Tree City USA	15
Pet Waste	
Implement a Pet Waste Education Program	5
Develop a Pet Waste Program	5
Adopt a Pet Waste Ordinance	5
Innovative Demonstration Projects	5 to 20
PLANNING AND LAND USE	
Participation in DHCD Sustainable Communities	20
Housing and the Comprehensive Plan	10
Land Preservation	
Conduct Easement Outreach that Encourages Inspection, Evaluation, and Stewardship	15
Build Easement Inventory	10
Innovative Demonstration Projects	5 to 20

* denotes Priority Action M denotes Mandatory Action

To learn more visit
www.sustainablemaryland.com



Environmental Finance Center
www.efc.umd.edu

Please note: Sustainable Maryland Certified actions and points may be subject to change.
 Printed on 55% recycled & 30% post-consumer waste paper.



HELPING COMMUNITIES INVEST TODAY FOR A MORE LIVABLE TOMORROW

Green Team Training Opportunity

Date & Time: Saturday, Sept 24, 2011, from 1:00 PM until 4:00 PM.

Location: Local Government Insurance Trust (LGIT), 7225 Parkway Drive, Hanover, MD 21076

Who should attend? Four participants, who will become the core of your Green Team, are invited from each municipality. The four should include two citizen leaders, a municipal staff member, and an elected official.

What will the training involve? A great way to get your municipality started in the Sustainable Maryland Certification program is to complete Green Team Training. This action is not mandatory but is strongly recommended. Completion of the training will earn your municipality 5 points toward certification and will be instrumental in helping you achieve certification.

The training session will provide practical ideas and methods for highly effective Green Teams, including, for example, forming strong municipal-citizen partnerships, consensus and team building methods, and creating vision and mission statements.

Green Team Training will be relevant both to communities just beginning to build a Green Team and for communities who already have a Green Team-like entity in place. During the training, separate breakout sessions will be tailored to address the needs of both.

How do we register? Seating is limited so please contact Megan Hughes at mhughes3@umd.edu to reserve your space! Preference will be given to municipalities who have already formally registered with Sustainable Maryland Certified and submitted a municipal proclamation, resolution, ordinance, or formal letter of participation.