

What is Sustainable Jersey?

Sustainable Jersey is a municipal certification program with a mission to make NJ healthy, just and efficient, one municipality at a time. The idea started in 2006 with the League of Municipalities and a small group of mayors. They realized that meaningful environmental change wouldn't happen without support at the local level. The Mayors Committee for a Green Future was created with a mission to make NJ green – one municipality at a time. They developed a 3-pronged approach:



- Develop standard criteria for communities that want to be known as “green”
- Compile a simple web-based tool to help municipal green teams accomplish their goals
- Provide financial incentives to reward and assist efforts

In 2008 their efforts were joined by the NJ Sustainable State Institute of Rutgers and the Municipal Land Use Center of the College of NJ. They put together a Working Group consisting of 150 NJ leaders, experts and organizations and sought funding from the Dodge Foundation and the NJ Office of Smart Growth. It was this group that developed the Sustainable Jersey program and launched it in 2009.

Municipalities apply for either Bronze or Silver level Certification based upon the number of actions that they have completed. Each Action comes with a specific set of criteria and is awarded a set number of points. Certification is applicable for three years at which point a Municipality can apply for recertification.

The Small Grants Program is made possible with generous funding from the PSEG Foundation. The Mountain Lakes Green Team was a recipient of a \$2000 grant in 2012 and 2016.

Sustainable Jersey and the New Jersey School Boards Association (NJSBA) announced plans to create a voluntary sustainability certification program called “Sustainable Jersey for Schools,” designed specifically for New Jersey’s public school districts and public charter schools. Similar to the municipal program, Sustainable Jersey for Schools convened experts, local school officials, educators and other stakeholders to determine the content of the program.