

Hamilton SustainabiliTEAM Year End Report 2022



Sustainable Jersey Certification Report
Submitted by Susan Lazarchick – Co-Chair

Hamilton Twp Green Team was certified Bronze on October 07, 2022 with 190 points by Sustainable Jersey. The Green Team's efforts were recognized at the Sustainable Jersey Luncheon in November for the certification cycle, which ended in June 2022.

Our full Certification Report is on The Sustainable Jersey page at:
https://www.sustainablejersey.com/certification/search-participating-municipalities-approved-actions/certification-report/?tx_sjcert_certification%5Bcertification%5D%5B_identity%5D=1064&tx_sjcert_certification%5Baction%5D=show&tx_sjcert_certification%5Bcontroller%5D=Certification&cHash=cab5a819ef4e4702895155f78b1f2541

Below is a summary of the actions we received credit for during this cycle. I left off a few that were done in the past that we had received points for.

1. **Establish a Creative Team** – 10 POINTS

Creative Teams are groups of individuals who lead efforts in arts and sustainability in their communities. They manage and evaluate creative placemaking initiatives, which include identifying cultural assets in the community, developing a plan for creative placemaking, promoting support for the arts, and encouraging other leaders to create more artistic and economically vibrant communities. The Green Team has formed a Creative Team for this purpose.

2. **Create Green Team** – This is the only required action to be a part of the Sustainable Jersey Program. 10 POINTS

The Green team is still active and has new members who are focusing on specific areas such as Green Infrastructure, Bicycling And Pedestrian Safety, Community Outreach, Community Cleanups, and proper Recycling And Elimination Of Single-Use Plastics. They are increasing outreach programs and tabling at community events. They are responsible for plastic film collection and planning a new Green Fair each year. They are working on implementing strategies to make the fair more environmentally friendly. They continue to partner with Clean Communities to collect electronic waste, rigid plastic waste, and Bulk Paper for the residents of the town. In 2021, they completed a Green Infrastructure Strategic Plan using \$15000 in grant money received in 2020, and completed a bicycling and pedestrian audit and implemented some of the recommendations.

3. **Community Education and Outreach** – 15 POINTS

The Green Team is continuing to participate in community events to raise their visibility and promote sustainability. They hold road clean-ups and table at events such as Dickens of a Holiday, Art in the Park, and the Fall Festival, providing information and educational materials on various sustainability topics and offering giveaways such as plants and reusable bags. A team member, Suzanne Marx, gave a talk about a road cleanup on Harbor Avenue in October 2021 to the Atlantic County Library Foundation. They also have a newsletter that is sent to their email list with informative content.

4. Green Challenges – 10 POINTS

The Green Team is promoting sustainability by encouraging people to take a pledge, which they started at their 2021 Green Fair. They have used the pledge at various events in 2021 and 2022 such as Hometown Celebration, Dickens of a Holiday, Art in the Park, and Fall Shredding event. They have received pledges from 2.5% of households in the community, and more than 1% of the population in the past 18 months. They are working to educate residents on the importance of using reusable bags and have had access to funding from Clean Communities to offer free reusable bags to Township residents.

5. Hold a Green Fair – 10 POINTS

The Green Team held their annual Save the Earth Expo on April 17, 2021 and April 2022 in partnership with Oakcrest High School and New Jersey Clean Communities. The outdoor event aimed to educate and encourage sustainable living through local vendors and exhibitors, food sales, demos, shredding, live performances and more. The event was supported by local media, town hall officials, LuAnne McCardell, Clean Communities Coordinator and Public Works. The vendor list included Municipal, County and Community organizations such as the Municipal Alliance Committee and the Atlantic County Utilities Authority (ACUA).

6. "Green" Your Green Fair – 10 POINTS

The Green Team's Green Fair was a success and they made efforts to make the fair as environmentally friendly as possible. They used plant-based and sustainably caught seafood and compostable containers, advertised for visitors to bring their own bottles, had a water refill station, offered cups made from recycled materials and gave coupons to those who brought their own containers or carpooled. They had a list of requirements for vendors to ensure that they offered sustainable products or information and banned balloons and single-use plastic bags. They also had a funeral home that offered "green Burials" with sustainable practices and products. They had a statement outlining their goals for the fair which included energy efficiency, alternative transportation use, local economy support and waste reduction, and used the Terrapass carbon calculator to calculate the carbon footprint of the fair as 7mT of CO₂e which is equivalent to planting 179 urban trees. They also gave away 1000 native trees at the event.

7. Emergency Management & Resiliency -Firewise Community – 10 POINTS

There are two active Firewise communities in Hamilton Twp Atlantic County, Horizons Woods Landing and Victoria Crossings, both with their own HOA. They host events for residents with presentations from local volunteer fire companies and NJ Forest Fire Service. They also engage in discussions with NJ Pinelands Commission over regulations that might impact their efforts to maintain firebreaks in their community. They have been invited to participate in tabling events with the Green Team and the Green Fair in May 2022.

8. Energy Tracking and Management – 20 POINTS

The Township of Hamilton established an energy tracking and management system in 2021 to help understand energy usage and create a baseline for savings. The system is based on energy usage and billing data provided by Atlantic City Electric and South Jersey Gas. LuAnne McCardell will continue the ongoing tracking process and bills will be scanned and sent to her for inputting. They have also uploaded an ESPM Statement of Energy Performance for each building in the inventory, which is a comparison to the average of similar buildings using national medians. The first step to saving energy at the

municipality's buildings is to benchmark, measure and compare energy to similar buildings. The municipality has the potential to save hundreds of thousands of dollars in the future with upgrades and grants are available to help. This tracking and benchmarking is an important first step.

9. Fleet Inventory – 10 POINTS

The Township of Hamilton had the assistance of Carly Shepherd, a student at Sustainable Public Service Montclair State University, to complete the Fleet Inventory spreadsheet and a one-page narrative for Sustainable Jersey. Carly Shepherd's research found that vehicle emissions are one of the leading causes of carbon in the atmosphere and that fleet inventories are important tools to aid in vehicle electrification. Through external research, internal data collection, and statistical analysis, Carly made electric vehicle recommendations for the municipality of Hamilton, NJ based on emission projections and cost analyses. The Township hopes that this inventory will be a first step towards making sustainable cost-saving changes for the fleet. The Green Team is a valuable resource for the Township in finding opportunities through Sustainable Jersey that does not cost the Township money to implement.

10. Smoke-Free and Tobacco-Free Public Places – 10 POINTS

The Township of Hamilton banned smoking at recreation areas and public buildings in 2003 and 2011. The ordinance can be found on the Township's website and signs are posted in parks and around public buildings. The Township is recognized on the "Global Advisors Smoke-free Policy" website and in the Cape Atlantic Coalition for Health's Smoke-Free Toolkit. The efforts have made the recreation areas and public buildings more pleasant for all residents and promoted awareness of health among the public and employees at these buildings.

11. Bicycle and Pedestrian Audits – 10 POINTS

The bike and pedestrian audit process was completed in May 2021 with the help of Cross County Connection Transportation Management Association and the leadership of Lena Nguyen, a Green Team member and a Civil Engineering student at the University of Virginia. The audit process included a preliminary data review to choose the location, an online survey sent to residents, a walking audit conducted in downtown Mays Landing, and the results were presented to Township, County, and State transportation officials. The audit results led to some needed ADA intersection and sidewalk improvements and started a conversation with the County to add traffic calming features to Main St.

12. Green Infrastructure Planning – 20 POINTS

In 2019, the Township of Hamilton received a \$10,000 grant from Sustainable Jersey and ATLANTIC CITY ELECTRIC to work with the Rutgers Cooperative Extension Water Resources Program on a Green Infrastructure Planning project. The project included an impervious cover assessment to quantify the amount of stormwater runoff associated with impervious surfaces in the Township, a green infrastructure action plan to identify areas for green stormwater infrastructure, and a green infrastructure strategic plan to set long-term goals for managing stormwater runoff. The project was presented to the public and Township Committee, and the information was included in the updated Master Plan to help mitigate climate-related events in the future. The Green Infrastructure Action Plan Web Map and a video of the presentation can be found on the links provided.

http://water.rutgers.edu/Projects/HamiltonTwp-AtlanticCo/HamiltonTwp_AtlanticCounty/index.html
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JN2Nr4k3sNI&t=1785s> (09/20/2021 - Township of Hamilton Committee Meeting where Dr. Obropta presented his results of the work he performed for the Township.)

13. Prescription Drug Safety and Disposal – 10 POINTS

The Township of Hamilton has installed a permanent, 24/7 drop box for disposing of unused and expired prescription medications at Township Hall, with the goal of reducing misuse and toxic disposal of these drugs. The drop box is secure, monitored, and the drugs collected will be incinerated by the Police

Department using proper destruction procedures. The Green Team previously held prescription drug drop-off events and is happy to now have a permanent drop-box in place.

14. Community Paper Shredding Day – 5 POINTS

The Township of Hamilton holds at least one community paper-shredding event annually as part of its Clean Communities Program. These events take place in the spring and fall, typically on Earth Day and in the fall. The events are advertised through social media and press releases. In 2021, shredding days were held on April 17th and October 9th, and two events were held in 2022. Green Team members help out at these events.

15. Non-Mandated Materials Recycling – 10 POINTS

The Township of Hamilton's Green Team is participating in a TREX initiative to recycle shrink-wrap and turn it into a usable product. They have completed multiple 6-month programs with Trex Recycling in 2021 and 2022, and have set up collection bins and informational posters in 6 locations in Mays Landing. They also collect shrink-wrap at most of their events. The program is important as it includes types of plastic film that would otherwise end up in landfills. Trex rewards their efforts with benches that are installed in the Township. They continue to educate the public on reducing the use and recycling of all plastic materials to ensure a better environment for their community. Audrey and Sue gave a talk on Trex to the Township Committee, which was well received.

<https://youtu.be/xL1DS1bBU5A>

16. Waste Audit of Municipal Buildings or Schools – 10 POINTS

Ingrid Perez our former, Green Team Liaison as well as Audrey Polumbo, green team member participated in the William Davies Middle School Waste Audit on April 5, 2019.