

Certified sustainable

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CAMBRIDGE

— Three Mid-Shore municipalities recently were certified under Sustainable Maryland for their efforts to make their communities more environmentally friendly.

Cambridge, Easton and Centreville were certified this year under Sustainable Maryland and awarded their certifications at the Maryland Municipal League conference in late October. All three were the first municipalities in their respective counties to become certified through the program.

“Receiving the Sustainable Maryland Certified award is a prestigious achievement, one that demonstrates our city’s commitment to the people that live and work here, and the businesses that operate here,” said Cambridge Mayor Victoria Jackson-Stanley.

Run through the University of Maryland Environmental Finance Center, municipalities seeking to go green — to implement best practices in resource areas like water, energy, planning, health, food and economy — can seek aid and guidance from the program. If municipalities earn enough points, certain amounts given for each initiative undertaken, they are certified and recognized.

The program is aimed to find practices that best fit each individual municipality.

Cambridge was the first municipality on the Eastern Shore to complete a “green street,” according to the program. Maryland Avenue, one of the key gateway streets to downtown Cambridge, was outfitted with porous concrete sidewalks, pervious paver parking areas, rain gardens and dedicated bike lanes. LED streetlights are planned, as well.

The city also scored big points for its plans to redevelop Sailwinds Park off Maryland Avenue.

Some other highlights of Cambridge’s accomplishments include installing LED streetlights in town and LED lighting in city-owned buildings; compiling an inventory of the city’s energy use; adopting a “green purchasing policy” for procurement of municipal goods and services; and promoting the Second Saturday Art Walk.

“This certification will help promote Cambridge’s progressive stance on sustainability issues, which endeavors to combine green practice with cost savings,” Jackson-Stanley said.

Easton scored points for initiatives like the recently opened Eastern Shore Conservation Center on Washington Street; creating a watershed plan for the Tanyard and Windmill river branches; the Easton Business Alliance’s buy local campaign; finishing an urban tree canopy assessment and a tree planting plan; and creating an online sustainability resource center.



Centreville is certified Sustainable Maryland

Pictured above, from left, is Centreville Council Member Jim Beauchamp and Finance Director Martha Sparks with the Sustainable Maryland Certified award at the Maryland Municipal League conference in October.

Easton scored the most points for installing filters in 52 stormwater drains throughout town. They are designed to catch and remove debris, hydrocarbons, phosphorus and sediment from stormwater entering local waterways.

The town also replaced all its traffic lights with energy-efficient LED lights, which saved more than 50 percent of its energy use.

“The town of Easton is deeply committed to both environmental stewardship and fiscal discipline,” Easton Mayor Bob Willey said. “This program emphasizes both and recognizes the combined work of so many dedicated people in our community.”

Some of the initiatives that led to Centreville’s certification include establishing a green business certification program; creating a policy and program for pet waste; having three “Maryland Green Schools;” and creating a Corsica River watershed plan, which is nationally recognized for its contribution in research, according to Sustainable Maryland.

The town also scored big points for its Centreville Heritage Plan, which is intended to promote economic revitalization through heritage tourism and focus on the town’s historical role as a maritime and rail transportation hub for the Mid-Shore. It also was given kudos for initiating development design standards that aim to create development and redevelopment that meet the visual, functional and aesthetic objectives in town.

Another major point-getter for Centreville was its solar panel project. The town installed 4,172 solar panels, which are projected to save town residents more than \$1 million over the next 20 years and will help offset costs to operate the wastewater spray irrigation system, wastewater and water treatment plants and other town-owned facilities.

“Centreville has made great strides to become a more sustainable community and we are extremely proud to be acknowledged for the efforts of our staff, volunteers and citizens,” said Centreville Town Council President Tim McCluskey.