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Frederick pursuing sustainability re-certification from state

By Sylvia Carignan scarignan@newspost.com Nov 25, 2015

The city of Frederick is racking up sustainability points in an effort to earn re-certification from a state program that celebrates communities that make extra efforts to go “green.”

Frederick, like several other municipalities in the county, has received “Sustainable Maryland” certification. Municipalities organize environmentally conscious events, plan green improvements and create “green teams” to earn points toward certification.

Certain actions, such as creating a “green team,” are required, though most others are at the discretion of the municipality. Municipalities must pass a resolution to state their intent to pursue “Sustainable Maryland” certification.

Frederick started pursuing its certification in 2011, and earned it in 2013 with its local farmers markets, community gardens and efforts to control algae on Carroll Creek. The city’s current certification is valid until 2016.

Mike Hunninghake is the program manager for “Sustainable Maryland.” He recently spoke to Frederick’s Green Initiative Team, a group of city residents helping advance the city’s sustainability projects.

“One of the goals of the program is to urge them to broaden and deepen their sustainability initiatives,” Hunninghake said.

He said the program would recognize the city’s efforts to make its streets more bike-friendly, including Bike to Work Day and a **bike-share feasibility study**, and its watershed stewardship activities, including tree plantings and stream cleanup days.

The city has also recently installed pervious surfaces over some tree wells downtown, to provide more walkable surface area and protect the trees’ roots.

“They also are great for stormwater because the material allows water to move through it quickly and doesn’t clog,” Frederick Sustainability Manager Jenny Willoughby said.

She believes the city is likely to get certification points on those wells since they are an innovative project.

Willoughby hopes the city's Earth Month activities and "Healthy Eating Active Living" policy will help the city earn sustainable status from the state program. The policy, enacted in June, encourages the city to plan and construct an environment that encourages walking, biking and physical activity.

Emmitsburg, Burkittsville, Brunswick, New Market, Middletown, Walkersville and Thurmont have all begun the certification process or have been certified by the state program. There are 60 municipalities across the state that are participating in the program, and 30 certified Maryland municipalities.

Follow Sylvia Carignan on Twitter: @SylviaCarignan.

Correction

This story previously stated the city earned its certification in August, and that it will be valid until 2018, but the city earned certification in 2013, which will be valid until 2016.

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