

Hagerstown receives Sustainable Maryland Certified award

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A city official called it a team effort that led to Hagerstown being honored with a Sustainable Maryland award.

Hagerstown was one of 12 Maryland municipalities honored Oct. 27 at the Sustainable Maryland Awards Ceremony at the Maryland Municipal League's annual fall conference in Cambridge, Md.

Sustainable Maryland is an initiative of the Environmental Finance Center at the University of Maryland.

"Sustainability is, by definition, meeting the needs of the present without compromising the future generations to meet their own needs," Hagerstown City Engineer Rodney Tissue said.

It took a "team effort" to put the extensive application together after the city learned about the program from the municipal league, Tissue said.

"We felt like this community was already doing a lot of things that are considered sustainable, so we began the process about a year ago to compile everything the community is doing to show that we are qualified to be a certified Sustainable Maryland community," said Tissue, adding city officials were "very, very pleased" when they learned the city qualified for the award.

The certification allows the city to receive technical assistance from those who run the program and to give the city priority at receiving grants that will allow for additional sustainable work to be done in the city, Tissue said.

Hagerstown joins 29 other Maryland municipalities that have received the designation, only 19 percent of communities. Of the honorees this year, eight are receiving the certification for the first time, such as Hagerstown, while four were recertified.

Critical to the certification application was not only the city government-led initiatives, but also community grass-roots efforts, such as pop-up shops and Second Saturday events, Tissue said.

Among the possible ideas to keep the momentum going, Tissue suggested energy audits, a stream cleanup day at Hagerstown's City Park, replacing streetlights with LEDs, getting more involved with the national Let's Move effort and developing a CSA (community-supported agriculture) drop-off site.

"I am proud and honored for the city of Hagerstown to be recognized with the Sustainable Maryland certification," Hagerstown Mayor David S. Gysberts said in a news release provided by Sustainable Maryland. "This recognition validates the vision of the elected body and leadership of the city and all the hard work of committed staff and citizens to bring our vision of a sustainable community into reality.



Sustainable Maryland Certified award

From left, Hagerstown City Engineer Rodney Tissue, Hagerstown Communications Manager Erin Wolfe, Hagerstown City Councilman Martin Brubaker and Hagerstown Mayor David S. Gysberts accept the Sustainable Maryland Certified award on Oct. 27 at the Maryland Municipal League's fall conference in Cambridge, Md.

For more information about Sustainable Maryland, go to www.sustainablemaryland.com.

Award highlights

The city of Hagerstown received a Sustainable Maryland Certified award last week at the Maryland Municipal League's annual fall conference in Cambridge, Md.

Highlights of the city's accomplishments include:

- Home to three Maryland Green Schools.
- Hosts a weekly Farmers Market and Community Garden.
- Received "Bicycle Friendly Community" designation from the League of American Bicyclists.
- Features a robust Buy Local campaign, including Center City Dollars, pop-up shops and various festivals.
- Partners with Recyclebank to provide an innovative recycling-incentive program.
- Adopted a green purchasing policy for procurement of municipal goods and services.
- Developed a water-conservation plan.
- Adopted a "Livable Streets" policy to foster a pedestrian, bicycle and transit-friendly environment wherever possible.
- Remained a Tree City USA community for 30 years.