Sustainable Maryland

Program Updates and Preparing for the 2023 Certification

Wednesday, April 5, 2023

UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND 1856

ENVIRONMENTAL FINANCE CENTER

SUSTAINABLE MARYLAND CERTIFIED

Agenda

- What's New
- Certification Overview
- 2023 Certification Timeline
- Applying for Certification
- Why Actions are Not Approved
- Final Reminders

New Website
A Fresh New Look

New Actions
Over 20 New Actions and 2 New Categories added in 2022

Community Action
- Public Wi-Fi
- Public Art

Community-based Food
- Food Forest
- Backyard Chicken Ordinance

Energy
- Municipal Renewable Energy
- Residential Solar
- MD Smart Energy Community Program (MSEC)
- Electrifying the Municipal Fleet
- Residential EV Adoption

Local Economies
- MD Main Street & Affiliate Program

Waste
- Organics Waste Composting
- Community-wide Recycling
- Keep Maryland Beautiful

Health & Wellness
- Pesticide Free Zones
- Child Environmental Health
- Maryland's Living Well Program

Natural Resources
- Create an Insect Hotel
- Bee City USA
- NWF Community Wildlife Habitat

Historic Preservation
- Historic Area Zoning Ordinance
- Become a Certified Local Government
- Establish Local Historic Property Tax Incentive
- Establish National Register Historic District

Transportation
- Bicycle/Pedestrian Plan
- Complete Streets Policy
- Safe Routes to School program
- League of American Bicyclist's Bicycle-Friendly Community Designation

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Basic Requirements for Certification

Bronze **150**

- At least 150 points
- Two Mandatory Actions
  - Create a Green Team
  - Green Team Action Plan
- Two of Six Priority Actions
  - Community Gardens
  - Municipal Energy Audits
  - Municipal Carbon Footprint
  - Green Purchasing Policy
  - Create a Watershed Plan
  - Stormwater Management Program

Silver **400**
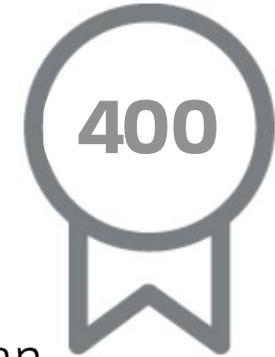
- At least 400 points
- Two Mandatory Actions
  - Create a Green Team
  - Green Team Action Plan
- Four of Eight Priority Actions
  - Community Gardens
  - Municipal Energy Audits
  - Renewable Energy*
  - Municipal Carbon Footprint
  - Green Purchasing Policy
  - Create a Watershed Plan
  - Stormwater Management Program
  - Complete Streets Policy*

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2023 Certification Timeline

April

Start Certification Application

June 30

Application Deadline

August

External Review

September

Final Review and Approval

October 16th

Award Recognition

SM staff will unlock applications and Municipalities will be able to revise and augment their applications during July and August.

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Applying for certification

Access
- Create an account at www.sustainablemaryland.com
- Assign contributor or owner privileges

Edit
- Access Municipal Dashboard
- Upload narrative and attachments

Submit
- Change status of Actions to "completed"
- Save and Submit

Revise
- Respond to reviewer comments
- Resubmit

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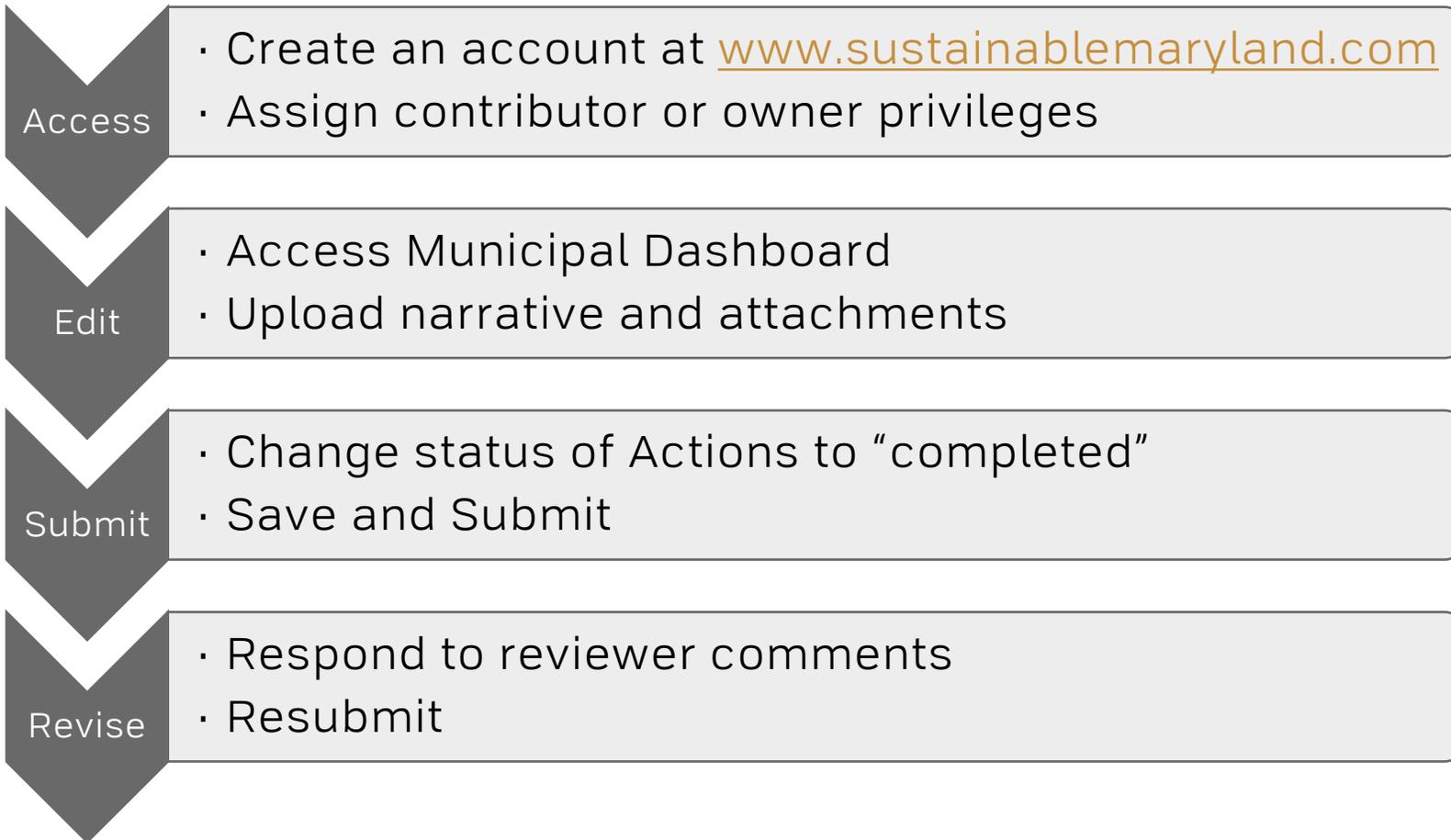
Access Your Municipality's Application

- Go to www.sustainablemaryland.com
- Click on "Sign in or sign up" on the top right corner
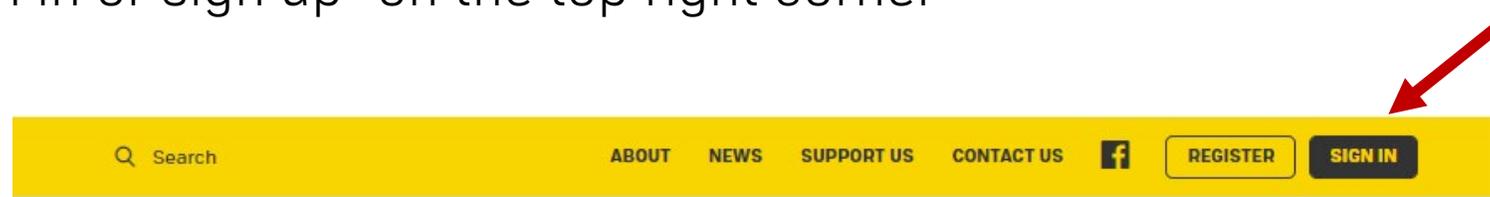
Sign Up for an Account

- If you do not already have an account, choose "sign up now"

- Fill out dialogue boxes
- Hit "create account"

Validate Your Email Address

- Check your email to validate your email address!
- Login on the Website
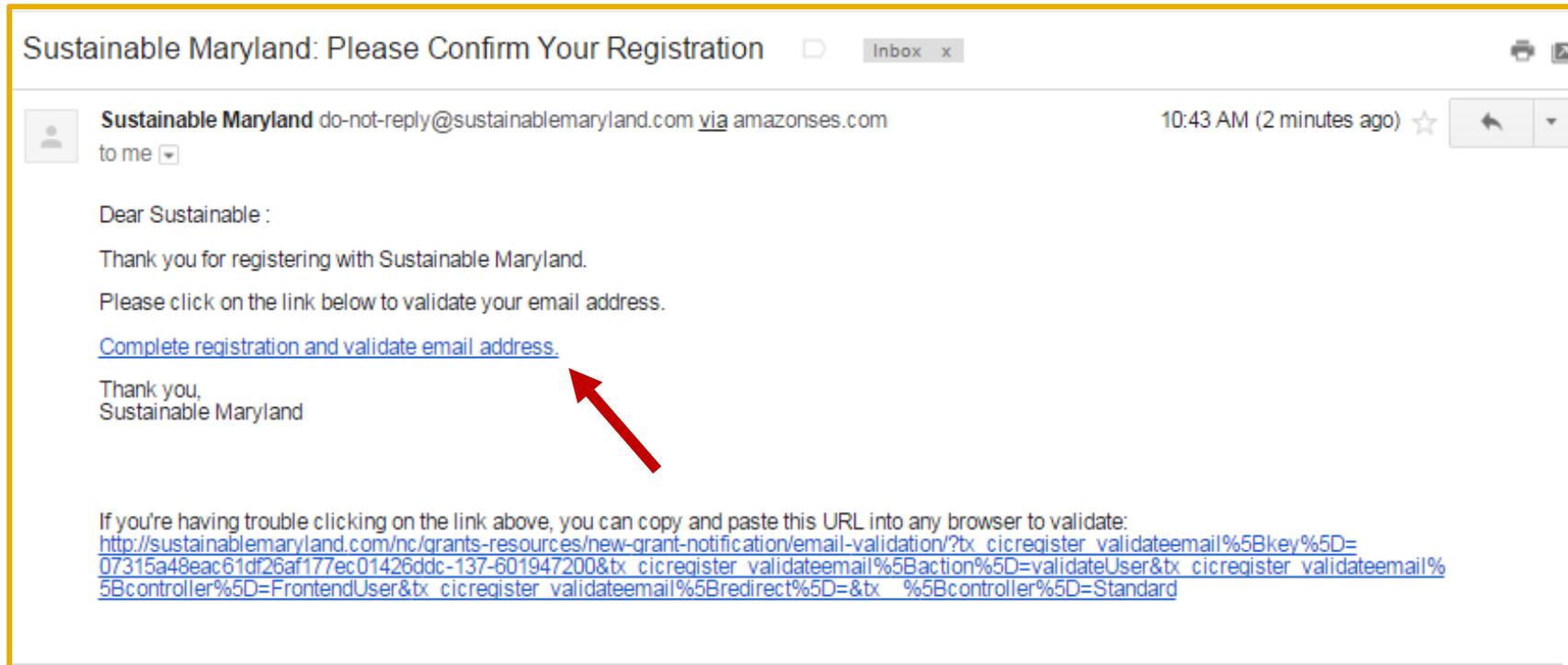
Request Application Permission

- Request application permissions from your municipality's Point of Contact (PoC)
  - PoC→ sign on to the website
  - Select Municipal Dashboard under Certification in the left-hand column

Add Users to Application

- PoC Select "Manage Municipality Users"

- Enter email address of user

- Assign role
  - Owners & Contributors can access, edit and submit the application.
  - Owners can add users

- Click "Add User"

- Notify user that they now have access to the application
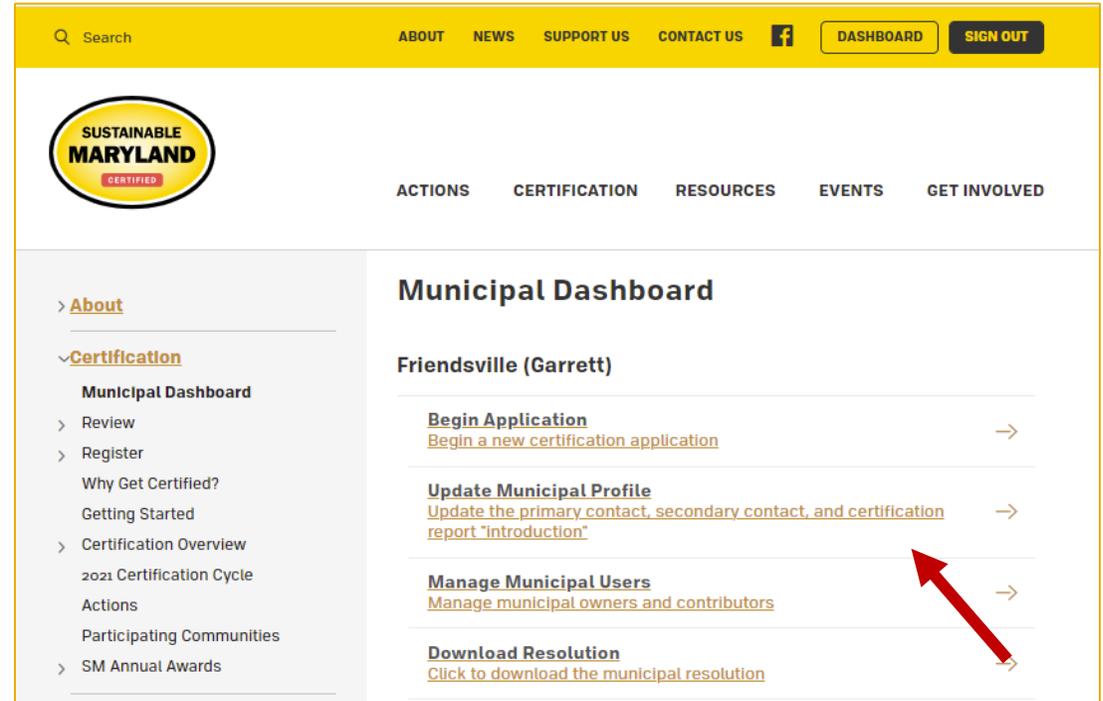
Work on Your Application

- Click on "Begin/Update Application"
  - You can select "Details and History" to see application specifics
  - "Application History": Certified applicants can view a report of their certification Actions
  - "Reviewer Feedback": Once your submitted application has been reviewed you can see comments
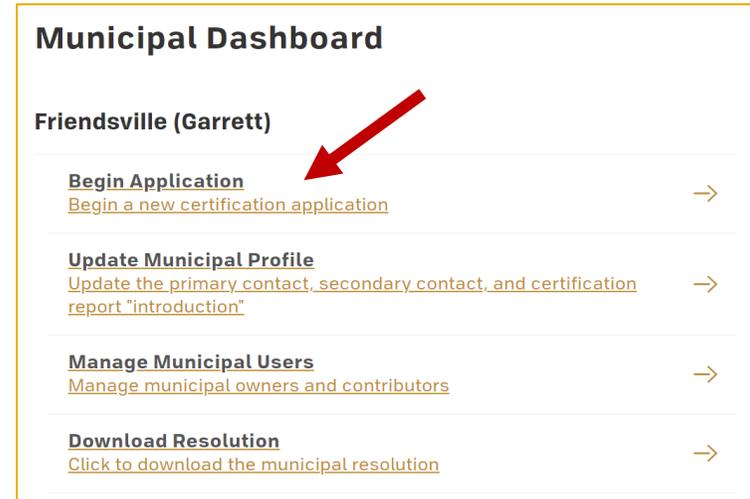
Municipal Dashboard

Friendsville (Garrett)

Begin Application
Begin a new certification application   →

Update Municipal Profile
Update the primary contact, secondary contact, and certification report "introduction"   →

Manage Municipal Users
Manage municipal owners and contributors   →

Download Resolution
Click to download the municipal resolution   →
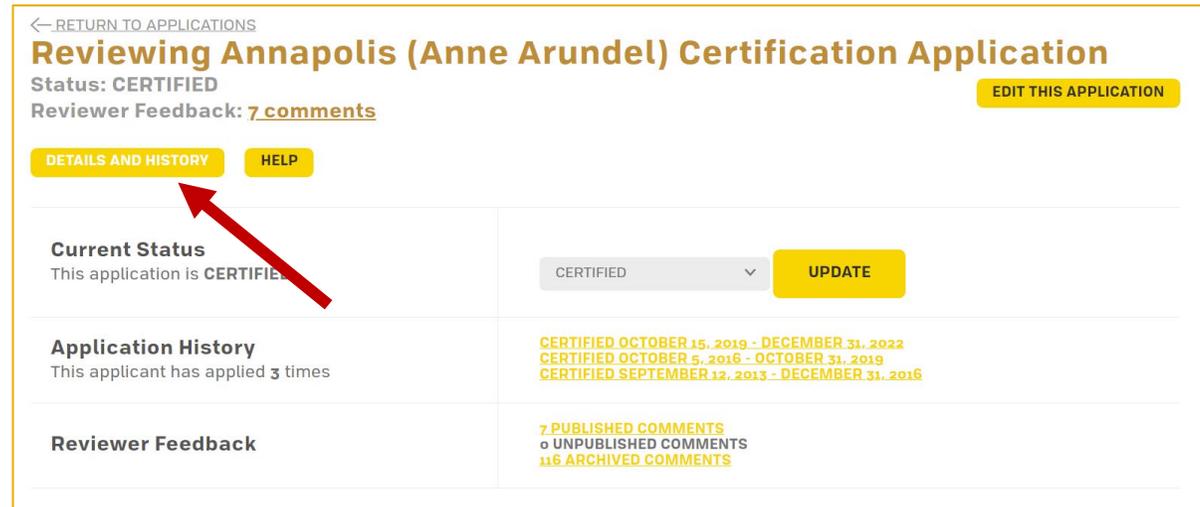
← RETURN TO APPLICATIONS

Reviewing Annapolis (Anne Arundel) Certification Application
Status: CERTIFIED
Reviewer Feedback: 7 comments   **EDIT THIS APPLICATION**

DETAILS AND HISTORY   **HELP**

Current Status
This application is CERTIFIED | CERTIFIED ⌄ | **UPDATE**

Application History
This applicant has applied 3 times   CERTIFIED OCTOBER 15, 2019 – DECEMBER 31, 2022
CERTIFIED OCTOBER 5, 2016 – OCTOBER 31, 2019
CERTIFIED SEPTEMBER 12, 2013 – DECEMBER 31, 2016

Reviewer Feedback   7 PUBLISHED COMMENTS
0 UNPUBLISHED COMMENTS
116 ARCHIVED COMMENTS

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Search Features

- Search Actions using key words in the Action title, by Action status or the New Action Benefits
  - Actions that meet search criteria will expand
  - Clear Search when complete
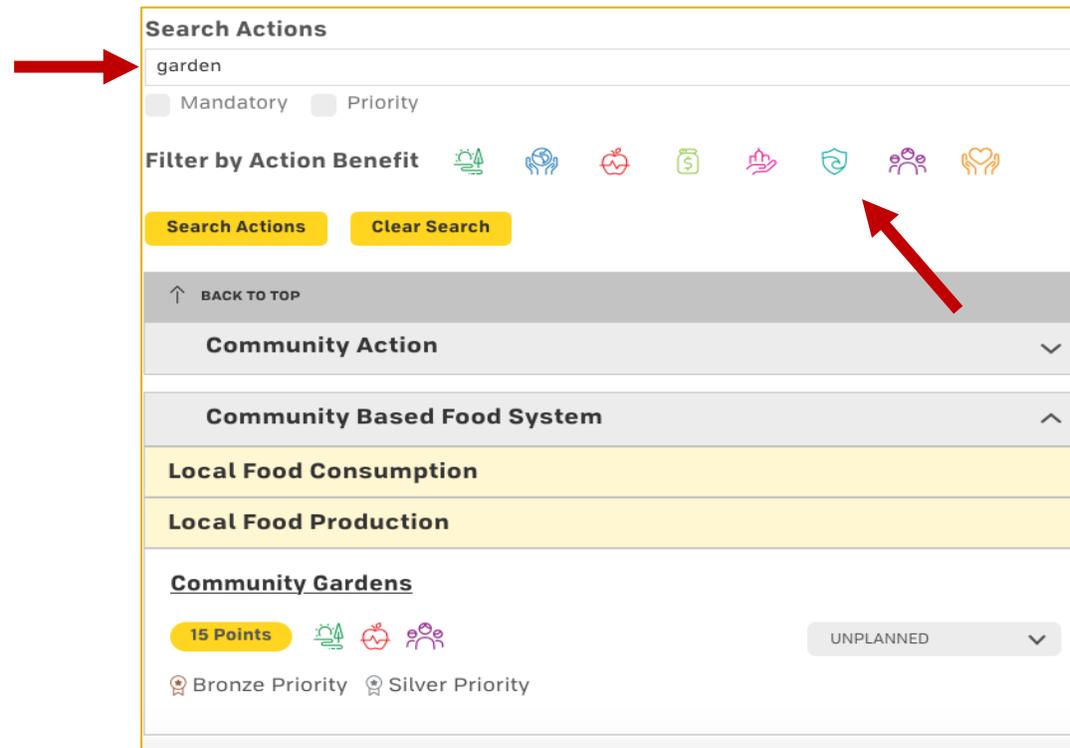
Action Statuses

- You can change Action statuses to planned or completed in order to communicate submission progress
  - This is an important step. It allows SM staff to know which Actions you plan on submitting ahead of time.

Action Statuses

Status	Explanation
Unplanned	Default status
Planned	Changed by user to indicate it will or has been worked on
Completed	Changed by user to indicate the Action submission is completed and ready for review
Expired	Points previously awarded credit, but due to expiration dates must be revised in order to obtain points this cycle
Approved	Points that have been reviewed and accepted
Not Approved	Credit not awarded last time Action was reviewed
Must Revise	Status following review indicating revision needed to be awarded points

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Action listings

- Click on the Action title to go to the Action Submission Page and view Action description
- Description will provide guidelines for SM Actions and detailed Submission Requirements

Variable Point Actions

- The points awarded for the Action will vary based on what has been accomplished (e.g. Participate in MD Green Schools, Innovative Demonstration Projects)
  - User selects point value they feel is supported by the documentation as part of the submission
  - Reviewer confirms point value selected or changes based on review of the documentation

Status
Current action submission status: **Not Approved**

NOT APPROVED ⌄

Requested Points
Point level requested for this submission

50 ⌄

Requested Points Are Not Guaranteed!!!

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Action submission page

- You upload documentation for a specific Action here.

- Enter a detailed narrative
  - Draft the narrative in a saved Word document and copy-paste it to the dialogue box

- Upload documentation
  - Choose file and click "Upload"
  - Make sure to change the Document Title to include your Municipality Name
    - E.g., Hyattsville-Farmers Market-Vendor Contract

- Change Action status to Completed
  - DON'T FORGET THIS STEP***

- Click "Save Action Submission"

- RECERTIFYING COMMUNITES SHOULD NOT DELETE PAST ENTRIES***
  - Edit the information where things have changed or new things have occurred and at the end provide a statement indicating the action is ongoing in the present year.

← BACK TO APPLICATION

Annapolis (Anne Arundel) Application for Certification

Action Submission: Innovative Demonstration Projects - Community Action

Directions: Please complete this form to submit this action as part of your application. First, mark the Status as "planned" and, if it is a variable point action, indicate the **Requested Points**. See the action text for the action requirements associated with each point level. After you have entered the **Description and Implementation** and **Uploaded the Supporting Documentation**, click on the **Save Action Submission** button. Finally, when the action submission is complete and ready for review, change the status from "planned" to "completed" and resave.

Status
Current action submission status: **Not Approved**

COMPLETED ▾

Requested Points
Point level requested for this submission

50 ▾

Description of Implementation:
In the text box below, please provide a short summary (300 word maximum) of what was accomplished and the impact it had or will have on the community. Include relevant references to the uploaded materials. If you are pasting information into the text box, please be sure to check the content and format of the entry.

TEXT GOES HERE

Upload Supporting Documentation
Please upload the supporting documentation required as outlined in the "*What to submit to earn points for this action*" section of the action. Simply enter a document title, click on the **Choose File** button to select the file, and then click on the **Upload** button. Up to six files can be uploaded. Each file must be uploaded individually. Individual files cannot exceed 20 MB. If there is a need to provide more than six documents, please combine documents into one PDF file. To remove any uploaded file, simply click the "X" in the column labeled "Delete." Be sure to click on the **Save Action Submission** before exiting this page.

DOCUMENT TITLE
Enter the name of your document

Choose File | No file chosen

ATTACH FILE

TYPE	TITLE	UPLOADED ON	DELETE
pdf	Annapolis Green and the City's Plastic Free Educational Campaign	9/10/2019 at 01:40 PM	×

SAVE ACTION SUBMISSION

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A Note on Innovative Demo Projects

- To submit more than one IDP
  - In the narrative text box, provide a numbered list of IDP titles for each Action that you wish to receive points for
  - Provide a full summary and supporting documentation in an attachment
  - IDP points are typically in ranges depending on the Action type and documentation provided
  - Each Action Category has a max of 50 pts for IDPs

Supporting Documentation

TYPE	TITLE	UPLOADED ON
pdf	Take Back Our Yards Mosquito Control Program	6/16/2017 at 05:55 PM
pdf	May 2017 Newsletter Describing Take Back Our Yards and Community Programs	6/16/2017 at 05:55 PM
pdf	UP FY 2018 Adopted Budget	6/16/2017 at 06:00 PM
pdf	UP Website Screen Shot - Mosquito Control	6/16/2017 at 06:06 PM
pdf	UP April 2017 Newsletter	6/16/2017 at 06:14 PM
pdf	Azalea Classic Website	6/16/2017 at 06:16 PM

Type of Action	Approx. Points
Events	5 pts
Small-scale/pilot projects	5-10 pts
On going programs	10-15 pts
Innovative policies/ordinances	10-15 pts
Large-scale implementation projects	10-20 pts
Detailed Planning Documents w/ Implementation Strategies	10-20 pts

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Submit Your Application

- Submit button turns yellow when Approved and Completed Actions meet the minimum certification requirement
  - Don't forget to change your Action statuses to Completed
- Select submit Application button
  - Once submitted, Completed Actions are locked from editing
  - We are happy to review your Action Submissions before June 30th. Send us an email request when your Action submissions are completed.
  - Please wait to submit your full application until June 30th so you may continue to make edits.

Certification Criteria

Required	2
Priority	2
Points	150
Categories	6

Show requirements for:
✓ BRONZE ☐ SILVER

Action Totals
(Approved)

Required	2/2
Priority	2/6
Total Points	185/1285
Categories	5/8
Total Actions	10/72

SUBMIT APPLICATION FOR REVIEW AND CERTIFICATION

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Responding to Reviewer feedback

- Reviewers will mark each Action as "Approved "or "Must Revise"
  - Actions marked as Must Revise will also have comments in the Reviewer Feedback box summarizing edits needed to have the Action approved
  - Feedback from previous submissions can be found by clicking "Show Archived Comments"
- Applications will be unlocked, and you will receive email notification when reviews are completed, at which point you will be given time to make revisions.

Reviewer Feedback

POSTED: 10/11/2019 2:27 PM   STATUS: PUBLISHED

SUBJECT
Cannot get points for same action under two action categories

BODY
Points for this Action were assigned under Local Economies IDP

EDIT   DELETE

2023 certification timeline

May

Certification Applications Open

June 30

Application Deadline

August

External Review

September

Final Review and Approval

October 16th

Award Recognition

Remember, SM staff will unlock applications and Municipalities will be able to revise and augment their applications during July and August.

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Why actions are not approved

Pitfall	How to Overcome
Failing to Establish the Municipal Connection	In order to receive points for an Action ensure that there is clear evidence of participation by the Municipality. (e.g., lead, funding, resources, promotion, etc.)
Action Implemented Expired/Too old	Review Submission, Requirements; Update Action as necessary
Proper documentation not submitted	Double-check Action submission requirements and documentation uploaded
Misinterpretation of Action Goals	Be sure to closely read the "What to Do" and "What to Submit" portion of the Action to verify that what you plan on submitting is in line with the intent of the Action
Seeking credit for same activity under two different Actions	One activity may only be given credit under one Action; designate someone that oversees entire application
Not conducting outreach/education component required for many Actions	Read the submission "What to Do" and "What to Submit" sections closely

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Re-certification guidelines

Action	Explanation
Create a Green Team	GT is still on going. Update of participants contact information. 2 agendas and meeting minutes from last year and projected schedule.
Green Team Action Plan	Note what has been accomplished from previous action plan and update with next three-year strategy.
Events	Must be within 12 months
Programs	On going and maintained. Demonstrate what has been done recently within 12 months
Ordinance	Still in place. Provide metrics on usage/outputs or implementation
Projects	Infrastructure is still in place and provide any data on use
Plans	Reviewed and updated w/in 6 years. Demonstrate what has been implemented (energy audits are w/in 3.5 years)

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Final Certification Reminders

- Make sure to update your municipal profile with the most recent contact information
- Don't leave it to the last minute
- Collaborate! Work with neighboring towns & other organizations

Sustainable Maryland Program Reminders

SM Virtual Spring Happy Hour!!!

- Join us Friday, April 14, 4-5pm
- https://umd.zoom.us/j/98883736615
- +1 301 715 8592

SM Pave Drain Tour

- Register to attend the site visit on Monday, April 17, 6:30pm
- http://events.constantcontact.com/register/event?llr=bhiq8ucab&oeidk=a07ejo6hnam4ed2cd61

Pepco Sustainable Communities Grant

- Coming Soon!

Sustainable Maryland Support

- Additional Support Needed?
- Contact:
  - Brandy Espinola, SM Program Manager:
    bespinol@umd.edu (510) 545-6483
  - Mike Hunninghake, SM Program Manager:
    mikeh75@umd.edu (301) 405-7956

- Join the Sustainable Maryland Mailing List
- Follow Sustainable Maryland on Facebook

Frequently asked Questions

- Does changing status and updating Actions on the town's application change what the public can view on the Sustainable Maryland website?
  - No, the town's public report is a static copy of the town's application at the time of the last certification approval. Any changes made to the application will only be visible to the folks who have access to the town's application, i.e., EFC staff, Reviewers, and Town's Green Team.
- Is the IDP point limit, 50 points total across all SM IDPs or 50 points for each Action Category?
  - The 50-point limit is per each IDP Action Category.
- How can I access the town's application if the previous primary point of contact is no longer available to assign permissions?
  - Notify the EFC staff and we can reassign the application's ownership permission.
- Should documentation uploads be in a particular format?
  - While you are welcome to upload a number of document formats (i.e., Word, PDF, Excel), EFC staff has a preference for PDF when at all possible.

Frequently asked Questions

- Elaborate on how do you submit multiple IDPs.
  - When submitting multiple IDPs list the Action names in the narrative Text box and provide a detailed action narrative with the supporting documentation in the uploaded documentation field. See and example IDP submission here.

- What documentation is needed to demonstrate sufficient promotion of Actions?
  - Documentation is used to demonstrate Action completion. To demonstrate that your town has promoted an event, please provide a screenshot of the Town's website showing the event promotion, an image of any additional social media posts, a copy of any handouts or flyers with the municipality logo demonstrating that you are a key partner, and/or images from flyers being posted in the community.

- Why do the events have to be in the last 12 months? Shouldn't the events reflect what the municipality has accomplished over the past three years to meet the goals of the Sustainable MD program (since the last time the municipality was certified)?
  - Reviewers prefer that events be on-going or reoccurring, thus we ask to see that they have occurred within the last 12 months. That said, we often will award points for larger events or actions that occurred within the three-year re-certification period if they demonstrate a larger impact. This is a requirement that the EFC staff is reviewing and possibly revising for the new certification tiers.

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Frequently asked Questions

- Where can we find examples of Action submissions (i.e., carbon footprint studies)?
  - You can access submissions on the SM website under [Participating Communities](#). Search the map for various Actions using the tool bar in the right column. Click on the map bubbles to access the community Certification Report. This report will tell you exactly what they submitted, both in terms of narrative and documentation for each action. Also, SM staff can provide Action templates where available (i.e., carbon footprint, green purchasing policy).
- Can users toggle Action status without locking the Action?
  - Yes, users can toggle between Action statuses without any issues. Only submitting the full application will lock the Actions.
- Are there various types of user permissions?
  - Yes. You can assign owner permissions which allows the user to have complete control to edit PoC and submit application. Or you can assign contributor, which will only allow them to add and edit Action submissions.

Frequently asked Questions

- Are points by 5's or can you have 3 points for example?
  - Currently, most actions are by 5-point increments. Occasionally we will assign IDPs at smaller increments, but most other actions are by 5's.
- How do qualify a school as green?
  - To receive points for the MD Green Schools you must have Green Schools or Centers in your municipal boundary or have documentation that shows that at least 25% of the student population resides in your municipality.
  - How to Apply to be a Green School (http://maeoe.org/resources-for-teachers/)
  - Map of Current Green Schools (http://maeoe.org/complete-green-schools-list/)
- How can we collaborate more with other SM communities?
  - You can network with SM communities at any SM event (Green Team Summits, Leadership Trainings, Workshops, etc.) or you can let us know what projects you are interested in so we can connect you to a partner community who already has experience with that sort of project
  - All SM Certified community reports are on our website. Click on any certified community on the Participating Communities map and click on View Report this report contains the community's SM Application with all the steps they took to complete each Action.