



Sustainable Jersey Community Certification Report

This is the Sustainable Jersey Certification Report of Hightstown Boro (Mercer), a Sustainable Jersey silver certified applicant.

Hightstown Boro (Mercer) was certified on October 19, 2018 with 385 points. Listed below is information regarding Hightstown Boro (Mercer)'s Sustainable Jersey efforts and materials associated with the applicant's certified actions.

Contact Information

The designated Sustainable Jersey contact for Hightstown Boro (Mercer) is:

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Title/Position:	Chair / Hightstown Environmental Commission
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Sustainability Actions Implemented

Each approved action and supporting documentation for which Hightstown Boro (Mercer) was approved for in 2018 appears below. Note: Standards for the actions below may have changed and the documentation listed may no longer satisfy requirements for that action. Additionally, points associated with actions prior to 2013 certifications may not be accurate.

Animals in the Community

Companion Animal Management Plan

10 Points

Program Summary:

The Borough of Hightstown's Animal Welfare Committee reviewed and enacted a companion Animal Management Plan in April, 2014. Review and revision of the plan took place at the committee meeting on April 17th. The finalized plan was reviewed and approved by the committee on May 22, 2014. This plan has been forwarded to the council to approve as a resolution. The resolution is in process of being approved. The council is taking this opportunity to update both the dog and cat ordinances and the Trap, Spay and neuter policy. We expect the Companion Animal Management plant to be approved in September.

 [TNR program for animal welfare](#)

 [Companion Animal Management Plan Documentation](#)

Companion Animal Management Pledge

5 Points

Program Summary:

The Green Team has worked with the Animal welfare committee to develop and work with the borough council to adopt the attached Companion Animal management pledge. The pledge was officially adopted by the Borough Council on April 7th, 2014 and distributed to all boards an commissions as well as posted on the borough website. We have attached a copy of an official distribution memo for our pledge, dated August 5th, 2014 for your review.

 [Companion Animal Management Pledge](#)

 [Companion Animal Management Pledge with Distribution Memo](#)

Pledge Supporting NJ Wildlife Action Plan

10 Points

Program Summary:

In 2017, Hightstown Borough proposed a discussion for a resolution regarding a pledge of Municipal Support for New Jersey's Wildlife Action Plan. On May 1st, the governing body discussed the Wildlife Acton Plan (WAP), the history of WAP and updates that occurred in 2005, 2008 and 2011, and incorporating the interests of WAP into municipal planning as Hightstown falls in the Piedmont Plains Landscape Conversation Zone. On May 15th, the council passed the resolution unanimously and intends on incorporating the seven principles of the pledge into the master plan with revisions, the environmental resources inventory, and zoning. The most important existing recreational assets are the four existing parks, Peddie Lake and the Rocky Brook Creek corridors. Borough Officials believe it is imperative for the borough to maintain, protect, and preserve the areas of open space and natural resources for the ecological wildlife in Hightstown.

 [Borough Distribution Memo](#)

 [Hightstown Pledge Supporting NJ Wildlife Action Plan](#)

Arts & Creative Culture

Creative Assets Inventory

10 Points

Program Summary:

The Hightstown Cultural Arts Commission is engaged in an ongoing effort to survey and map its cultural assets. A copy of the survey is attached as an appendix and is available online and in print formats. The results are part of a comprehensive public art master plan called Hightstown Creative that provides not only site and non-site recommendations for potential public art and a detailed process for commissioning and maintaining a municipal art collection, but guidelines for cultural educational and performance opportunities. It holds a plan for geographic placement of public art in context with considerations of community input, visibility, public accessibility and safety, relationship to existing artwork, and environmental impact. Hightstown's Planning Board adopted the public art master plan in 2017 as part of the Borough's Municipal Master Plan. Hightstown Creative contains recommendations for the Borough to dedicate a percentage of redevelopment expenses for an arts enrichment fund and the inclusion of public art. The public art master plan considers all assets including current programs like Theatre in the Park, cultural festivals, and collaborations with the Borough Parks & Recreation Commission. The Hightstown Cultural Arts Commission meets monthly and minutes are available to the public on the Borough's website. Community involvement has grown exponentially during its brief four-year history with two pop up galleries in vacant downtown stores, participation in the Borough's annual Harvest Fair, Theatre in the Park, and a Pianos in the Park project in collaboration with the Parks & Recreation Commission. Its "Empty Bowls" project has reached over 1,000 people and supported the local food pantry with a donation of nearly \$20,000 over the past three years.

<https://www.facebook.com/HightstownCulturalArtsCommission?ref=bookmarks> <https://www.facebook.com/pages/Art-Station/122012977857139> <http://artstationstudios.com/> <https://www.facebook.com/HightstownTheatreinthePark/> <https://www.peddle.org/arts> <https://www.meadowlakesonline.org/index.php> All meeting minutes can be found on the Borough website: <http://www.hightstownborough.com/cultural-arts-commission/>

 [Cultural Arts Links](#)

 [Creative Arts in Hightstown Map](#)

 [Cultural Arts Survey](#)

 [Cultural Arts Minutes-2017](#)

Establish a Creative Team

10 Points

Program Summary:

In 2014, Hightstown Borough established the Hightstown Cultural Arts Commission per Ordinance 2014-10, to encourage artistic awareness, participation and expression, promote the employment of artists, and those skills in the crafts. Over the past two years the commission has worked with the greater community to establish pop-up art galleries throughout the borough, dramatic arts and theater performances with children of all ages at the local parks, and has written a Public Art Master Plan, which the borough has adopted. The goal of this commission is to promote the Hightstown area as a cultural center, where artists are welcome and can thrive. This commission works closely with the Council, Planning board, and the Green Team to promote the Arts in the Hightstown Area. The Creative Team's first and foremost goal will be to implement the adopted Public Art Master Plan's recommendations to the Planning Board, Council, and Hightstown Borough. The Hightstown Cultural Arts Chairwoman, and ArtPrideNJ's Director of Advocacy and Public Policy, Ann Marie Miller is helping lead this charge. Links for the Cultural Arts Commission:

<http://www.hightstownborough.com/cultural-arts-commission/> (minutes here also)

<https://www.facebook.com/HightstownCulturalArtsCommission?ref=bookmarks>

 [Cultural Arts Commission and Distribution Memo](#)

 [Amending the Borough Master Plan](#)

 [Public Art Master Plan Relevant Pages \(29 pages of 122 page document\)](#)

Municipal Commitments to Support Arts and Creative Culture

10 Points

Program Summary:

In 2014, Hightstown Borough established the Hightstown Cultural Arts Commission (CAC) per Ordinance 2014-10, to encourage artistic awareness, participation and expression, promote the employment of artists, and those skills in the crafts. Over the past four years the commission has worked with the greater community to establish pop-up art galleries throughout the borough, dramatic arts and theater performances with children of all ages at the local parks, and wrote a Public Art Master Plan, which the borough has adopted. Included in the plan is a requirement that a percentage of any redevelopment efforts be dedicated to the inclusion of public art. HightstownCreative, an initiative of the Cultural Arts Commission, identified Hightstown's creative potential assets and challenges, defined goals for public art site/non-site, created dynamic educational collaboratives, and established recommendations to borough officials and the planning board to reinvigorate Hightstown's cultural initiatives. It is the result of research and data drive results by surveying local artists, local site assessment, and community engagement to chart a course for Hightstown's art and cultural development. The second pop up gallery this year took place in January 2017 featuring the work of artists from 5 neighboring towns (Roosevelt, West Windsor, Hamilton, Princeton—in addition to Hightstown). The pop up gallery took place in a vacant storefront on Route 33 which remains vacant. Over 100 people viewed the work over a one week period. . 2017 and 2018 are proving to be banner years for our municipal commitment to the arts. A new building is being purchased to serve as the Borough offices as well as court and police facilities. The main core of the first floor is being dedicated to "Gallery" space to showcase local work. Also the planning board continues to actively work on the "Lofts" project that is anticipated to bring Artists lofts and workspaces to the Bank Street area of the borough. The Borough currently has 2 dedicated artist galleries and work spaces. Gallery 33 on Rt. 33 is primarily a gallery and retail space while the Art Station is all artist workspaces. Both are thriving and always busy. Please see: <http://artstationstudios.com/>

 [Amending the Borough Master Plan](#) [CAC March Newsletter](#) [Borough Hall redevelopment plan](#) [Public Art Master Plan Relevant Pages \(29 pages of 122 page document\)](#) [Bank Street Redevelopment \(P31\)](#) [Municipal Commitments Checklist](#)

Utilizing Your Creative Assets

10 Points

Program Summary:

Hightstown is extremely fortunate to have an active and growing arts community and Cultural Arts Commission that is dedicated to growing and enhancing the Arts culture in the Hightstown Area. We have great institutions in our community that actively promote the Arts and support our commission such as Meadow Lakes, a 100 acre senior living community that sponsors art shows during the year, The Peddie School that has a wonderful art gallery on campus and hosts our Cultural Arts Commission meetings each month. The Peddie School also volunteered their space for our annual "Empty Bowls" celebration. This is our 3rd year with this event, which has grown from 40 attendees to well over 300 this year. 2017 was an exciting year for Hightstown as a new permanent gallery space opened called Gallery 33. This 2000 square foot space is filled with local arts, crafts, artisan coffee, organic honey and small gifts from 10 Thousand Villages. <https://www.facebook.com/HightstownCulturalArtsCommission?ref=bookmarks>
<https://communitynews.org/2015/11/06/gallery-33-opens-in-hightstown/> <http://artstationstudios.com/>
<https://patch.com/new-jersey/eastwindsor/peddie-alumni-art-show-in-mariboe-gallery> Complete Meeting minutes can be found at: www.hightstownborough.com/cultural-arts-commission/

 Cultural Arts Commission Members

 Pop-Up Gallery poster

 Project "Empty Bowls"

Brownfields

Brownfields Inventory & Prioritization

10 Points

Program Summary:

In 2017, members of the Green Team coordinated with members of the Environmental Commission as well as the Borough Engineer to develop a Brownfields Inventory. Utilizing the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP) Dataminer site, the team identified and populated 7 brownfield sites, or "any former or current commercial or industrial site that is currently vacant or underutilized and on which there has been, or there is suspected to have been, a discharge of a contaminant." The team eliminated home oil tanks from the known contaminate sites and narrowed it only to include former or current commercial and industrial sites. In addition, the Environmental Commission reviewed the list with the Green Team and borough officials, and identified changes and updates that needed to be made to the inventory. The highest priority critical site was the Phillips Lighting Company property also known as "the Rug Mill" followed by the former Coca Cola Plant and Agway Energy Products. This Brownfields Inventory is critical to Hightstown, as it once was a former industrial and warehousing commercial hub along the Camden & Amboy Railroad, and can find a new niche after remediation of these sites take place. These underutilized sites can help revitalize ratables and can contribute to the borough's economic and social growth in the long-run.

 Brownfields Inventory & Prioritization Documentation

 Brownfields Inventory & Prioritization Map

 Brownfields Inventory & Prioritization NJDEP Data

 Borough Distribution Memo

Brownfields Reuse Planning


15 Points

Program Summary:

Redevelopment efforts surrounding the Rug Mill site initially commenced in 2003. Unfortunately, for various reasons, including the recession, redevelopment of the site never came to fruition. With market conditions improving, Hightstown revised the 2004 Redevelopment Plan in early 2015. Later that year, R. Black Global (RBG), a developer, expressed interest in the site. Discussions between borough officials and RBG thereafter ensued. Following the meetings, concept plans were prepared and a public presentation of the concept plans were presented to a joint Council and Planning Board meeting on January 25th, 2016. The plan was presented to over 100 residents and was well-received from the public, stakeholders, and officials. After the presentation, Hightstown adopted a resolution designating RBG as the Conditional Redeveloper for the site. The borough continued to work with RBG's representatives and negotiated a full Redevelopment Agreement, which fully governs the undertaking of the project, including the redeveloper, at its sole cost and expense, to investigate, remediate the site, and work with the LSRP, NJDEP, and US EPA. The agreement was approved by Hightstown in 2016 and amended since to include the latest residential unit count. The developer has since made two additional public presentations regarding the changes in the concept plan and will soon submit the preliminary and final site plans in the summer of 2017. The Mills plan is largely an adaptive reuse of the brownfield site and existing masonry structures that have defined the neighborhood for a century and enhance connections to existing developments in the downtown. The impact will build upon and reinforce Hightstown as a designated "Town Center," located in the fringe planning area, from the 2001 State Development and Redevelopment Plan.

 Brownfields Reuse Planning - Concept Plan for the Mill

 Brownfields Reuse Planning - Public Presentation

-  Brownfields Reuse Planning - New Rendering of The Mill
-  Brownfields Reuse Planning - Revised Redevelopment Plan
-  Brownfields Reuse Planning - Excavation and Remediation
-  Brownfields Reuse Planning - Recently Revised Redevelopers Agreement

Community Partnership & Outreach

Community Education and Outreach

10 Points

Program Summary:

The Hightstown Green Team created a brochure describing the Greenway paths, open space and links throughout our Borough. The brochure has been distributed at our Harvest Fair, various other community events, and is available permanently at the municipal building. We were able to print the brochure through funds generated from a community member's generous donation. The brochure is available at every EC event, most recently at the St. Anthony's green fair in April. In 2018 the Greenway Brochure is being updated with a grant from ANJEC. The Green Team is working with the Peddie School and the Hightstown High School to enhance the portion of the Greenway that is in Rocky Brook Park. The enhancement will include a map of the park with the elevated walkways through the wetlands areas, specific signage along the greenway detailing the function of the wetlands and specific items of interest. The concept idea was initially introduced this spring, and will be advertised and volunteers will be sought from the 2 schools and the Meadow Lakes retirement community this fall. The stormwater presentation on Non-Point Source Pollution, Stormwater Run Off and what can be done to limit run off of pollutants and protect water quality of Peddie Lake and Rocky Brook can be seen on a VIMEO video at the following site <http://vimeo.com/18181239>. This is a video of the actual presentation at Peddie School. The Green Team in Hightstown organizes, participates, advertises and recruits volunteers for bi-annual Borough-wide stream and town clean-ups. Team members act as liaison between the Public Works Dept and Borough Council to continue and initiate green ideas. These projects have been ongoing for at least 3 years and are a permanent part of annual Green Team planning and meetings. The EC and Green team have been focusing our outreach efforts- in 2018 we have expanded our base by including the Peddie School, the Hightstown High School and the Meadow Lakes Retirement Community as part of our regular meetings. We have permanent liaisons from each that regularly participate in our meetings and on committees. The three are a great resource of volunteers, expertise and put up posters and flyers in their schools or auditoriums. The EC and Green Team passively market our website and Facebook pages. We have ample business cards at all our events and leave at the counters in local restaurants promoting our sites. We get a fairly good response and view rates from our posts, averaging 50+ views per post.

-  Greenway Brochure
-  Water Conservation display
-  Hightstown Websites providing Education

Create Green Team




10 Points

Bronze Mandatory

Program Summary:

In 2017, the Borough Council once again established the Green Team in Hightstown, in cooperation with the Environmental Commission. The Green Team completed the bi-annual Borough-wide stream, assisted in tree planting, and clean-up events throughout the Borough. The Green team is playing an important role, representing many of the Boards and commissions in town as well as the local government. Currently, the Green Team is working in coordination with a campaign titled Keep Hightstown Clean. As the warmer months approach, the Mayor and Council would like to remind the Borough's residents and visitors that we take pride in our community environment and need everyone's assistance with keeping Hightstown Borough clean. The Mayor and Council are also getting assistance from elementary school students and teachers with getting the message out by making a poster that will be displayed in various business windows, the Hightstown Library, and other public places throughout the summer months. The

posters, which are due in June, are looking to remind residents and visitors to use the appropriate trash and recycling receptacles throughout town to dispose of their trash and recycling. Names of current members: *Gary Grubb, Hightstown Environmental Commission and representing the Hightstown Parks and Recreation Commission; *Barbara Jones, Hightstown Environmental Commission; *Allen Keith LePrevost, Housing Authority and Environmental Commission *Donna LePrevost, Environmental Commission *Yan Trozier, Hightstown Environmental Commission; *David Zaiser Hightstown Environmental Commission, Shade Tree Officer; , Cultural Arts Commission Connor Montferrat, Borough Council, Board of Health and Environmental Commission Joshua Jackson, Planning Board Member Ken Lewis, Public Works Department Debra Sopronyi, Borough Administrator

-  [Green Team Resolution](#)
-  [Shredding, Stream Clean up and Tree Planting event](#)
-  [Green Team photos from 2018 Events](#)
-  [2018 Green Team Goals](#)
-  [Green Team/EC Site Plan Reviews](#)
-  [Distribution Memo](#)



Green Fairs

Hold a Green Fair

10 Points

Program Summary:

For the past three years we have organized a strong "green" presence at the Borough's Harvest Fair. We invited Stony Brook Millstone Watershed and the Mercer County Master Gardners to assist us in greening our fair. We have a "green" location strategically next to Peddie Lake and include organic farmers selling produce, green information about pets' rescue and pet health, and hand made natural crafts. At the fair, the Environmental Commission has held a recycling coloring book contest to encourage children to think about the environment. Children color environmental pictures that are judged for the cover of the new Environmental Commission coloring book. We provide information on composting, our watershed, and Hightstown's Greenway. We publicize stormwater management programs, including demonstration of rainbarrels (for kids to paint), and other small projects. The watershed group works to encourage people to respect the watershed and offers suggestions on how people can minimize run-off into the watershed. The Master Gardeners teach about sustainable gardening practices and educate people on the benefits of composting and using IPM rather than chemicals in the gardens. For the past 4 years, we have worked with Saint Anthony of Padua's Church Social Justice Committee in offering an environmental fair. The fair focuses exclusively on environmental themes and will have booths run by local environmental groups (Hightstown Environmental Commission included), as well as hands-on environmental activities for children. We are scheduled to help with and participate in 2 Green fairs in 2018. April 15th we will be at the St. Anthony's Fair (poster provided) and in October we will be the center of a Green Pavilion at the local Harvest Fair, which will feature approximately 10 tables all dedicated to energy and water conservation, and waste reduction. On April 21st the Green team is sponsoring a "Stream Clean Up" with the Stony Brook Millstone Watershed. The day will include numerous volunteers, free paper shredding by "Shred-It" and free trees (saplings) We will also be planting a "Princeton Elm" to replace a large tree that was damaged by this winters storms.

-  [2018 Green Fair Poster \(Spring\)](#)
-  [2018 Spring Green Fair Photos](#)

Diversity & Equity

Diversity on Boards & Commissions

10 Points

Bronze Priority

Silver Priority

Program Summary:

In May, 2018 the Borough of Hightstown undertook the process of studying the diversity of the boards and

commissions in the Borough. Each member of the 7 recognized boards and commissions as well as the Borough Council were sent the diversity survey. The survey was conducted using "Survey Monkey" and the results are published and attached. A total of 61 surveys were sent to Committee and Commission members. We received 38 responses and the information is being processed. The survey results are being compared to the 2010 census data and recommendations will be presented to the Council in July. In discussing this survey with the Borough Council in a public meeting, it was agreed that diversity needs to be considered when openings occur, and that outreach will be done to the Hispanic community to improve municipal involvement. This fall we have our first Hispanic person running for Borough Council.

-  [Diversity Survey](#)
-  [Raw Data from Survey](#)
-  [Analysis of Diversity Survey](#)
-  [Packet with Diversity Survey Analysis](#)

Community Energy Initiatives

Wind Ordinance

10 Points

Program Summary:

In 2013 The Borough of Hightstown's planning board, Borough Council and Environmental Commission designed, developed and implemented a significant Wind ordinance that outlines installation guidelines for Wind and solar installations in the Borough of Hightstown. This ordinance is being incorporated into the borough codes, master plan and has been distributed to all borough departments and commissions.

-  [Wind Ordinance Documentation](#)

Transportation Initiatives

Fleet Inventory




10 Points

Bronze Priority

Silver Priority

Program Summary:

In March 2018 the Environmental Commission, with the assistance of the Police Chief, Borough Administrator, Public Works director, borough Clerk and the Chief of the Fire Department worked together to complete the attached Fleet Inventory. The goal is to use this document to monitor our existing fleet to help us make better, greener purchasing choices. An analysis of the Fleet inventory was conducted and presented to the Mayor, Administrator, Department heads and the borough council on August 20, 2018. The E.C. strongly recommended an analysis be done using the fleet inventory to determine the use of the proposed vehicles, and alternatives that could be purchased. Our main difficulty is with convincing the Police department and Public Works that alternate fuel or smaller vehicles will work for their departments.

-  [Fleet Inventory](#)
-  [Fleet Inventory Analysis and Council presentation](#)
-  [Fleet Inventory public meeting](#)

Purchase Alternative Fuel Vehicles

10 Points

Program Summary:

Hightstown Borough awarded a new recycling contract this year and on February 1, 2017 the Hightstown Borough

Recycling Program changed. Not only would codes 1-7 recyclable materials be accepted, but the materials would be picked up using natural gas vehicles only. Hightstown is doing its part to help keep the town clean, but having cleaner air for residents to breathe in. Attached is the recycling contract awarded, fleet inventory provided by the contract, and the borough information posting. The entire municipality's Fleet Inventory will take some time to complete and I understand previous attempts for an inventory were not approved; however, I did obtain the fleet assigned specifically to the borough for the recycling contracts. This is attached.

 [Natural Gas Vehicle Used for Recycling - Hightstown Website Posting](#)

 [Recycling Trucks Assigned to Hightstown and Recycling Contract](#)

Food Production

Community Gardens 10 Points

Program Summary:

The Borough has a community garden that has provided community members access to garden space at Rocky Brook Park. The garden has been operating for the past several summers. A waiting list is maintained at the Borough hall, and is no longer advertised due to the waiting list for spaces. Unfortunately there is very little open space in the borough for additional gardens. The 2017-8 Season has 17 gardeners who are provided a space free of charge on a first come, first served basis. Tools and equipment have been donated to the gardens by local residents as well as mulch and compost. The gardens are overseen by volunteers from the Parks and Recreation department and the Environmental Commission. This year we even have a bee keeper that has placed an active honey bee hive near the gardens. Community Gardens at the Hightstown Housing Authority currently have 8 residents planting vegetables and flowers. A new initiative has started in 2018 with the "Children's Garden" at the Housing Authority. 12 planter boxes were donated and free plants and supplies were donated to the Resident Council to teach young children the benefits of gardening and food production. The cost to establish the HHA community gardens was approximately \$1500 dollars that was provided by the HHA. The labor to assemble the plots, fencing, children's planter boxes was donated labor by the staff of the HHA. This garden space has really taken off in popularity with the local residents, setting up a "vegetable exchange" to share the produce with all of the neighbors. The gardens will be expanded next year to add approximately another 400 square feet of space, new fencing and topdressing with organic compost. In October we will be having a program with the children to discuss what they liked and learned by gardening this year.

 [Qualitative Assessment](#)

 [2017-18 Community Gardeners](#)

 [Community Gardens-Photos](#)

 [Community garden photo](#)

 [Community Gardens Sites](#)

 [Gardener advertisement-Flyers](#)

Green Design

Green Building Policy/Resolution 5 Points

Program Summary:

On February 20th, 2018 the Borough Council discussed and reviewed the "Green Building Policy/Resolution. The Council members recognize that importance of such a policy, especially as the town is planning two major developments in the downtown area that will fill one long vacant Brownfield site, and an second on the waterfront. The Borough has also entered into a contract to purchase an historic structure downtown for a new Borough hall/Court complex which will be refurbished and modernized for energy efficiency. The resolution (2018-56) was unanimously approved by the Council and the resolution and distribution memo is attached.

 [Green Building Policy Resolution](#)

 [Distribution Memo](#)

Green Design Municipal Buildings

Upgrade/Retrofit-Water Conservation

10 Points

Program Summary:

The Borough of Hightstown has embraced water conservation for many years. With its own private water system, the Borough needs to maintain high quality. The cost for treating and distributing water has also been a major issue in the past few years. Several water saving strategies have been discussed and the Borough's Public Housing Authority became the test case for new products and long term testing. The Housing Authority tested and installed low flow aerators in all of its kitchen and bathroom sinks, low flow showerheads and 1.6 gallon flush toilets. The Housing Authority also installed new, state of the art laundry equipment that is designed to use only 25% of the water of the old machines. After 3 full years of testing, the Environmental Commission is starting a Borough wide water conservation program touting the benefits proven by the Housing Authority study.

 [Housing Authority-Water Conservation Measures](#)

 [Energy Star Data](#)

Health & Wellness

Smoke-Free and Tobacco-Free Public Places

10 Points

Program Summary:

Following the inaction of the state legislature and Governor, Hightstown made its parks smoke-free in Association Park, Dawes Park, Memorial Park, Rocky Brook Park and Roger C. Cook Greenway as well as in borough-owned vehicles. No-smoking ordinances have been adopted in 295 municipalities across the state. In Mercer County, similar measures have been passed in Ewing, Princeton, Trenton and West Windsor. The measure can be enforced by the business administrator, health officer, a police officer or any resident who chooses to sign a complaint against the violator. Violators are subject to a \$25 fine. The Green Team, Board of Health, Environmental Commission, and Parks and Recreation Commission led the efforts with Councilman Montferrat to protect the residents of Hightstown from secondhand smoke and keep the community clean. Discussions began in early June, with much public and council debate and finally being adopted on September 19, 2016. At the discussion meeting as well as the first and final ordinance readings, members of the commissions came to testify to the effects of smoking and the positive aspects of having smoke free parks in the community.

 [Hightstown Smoke Free NJ.com Article](#)

 [Smoke-Free Parks Ordinance](#)

 [Association Park Photo with Sign](#)

 [Hightstown Considers Smoke Free Places](#)

 [Hightstown is Smoke Free Article](#)

Innovation & Demonstration Projects

Innovative Community Project

10 Points

1

Program Summary:

The Borough Housing Authority has been awarded a Sustainable Jersey planning award grant of \$10,000 to implement a demonstration project of non-structural innovative stormwater management measures that can be used by residents and businesses in an urban setting. Plans have been drawn, costs estimated, consultants hired, and officials committed to the project. Implementation is anticipated in 2013. The project was completed in 2013 with tremendous success and recognition from around the State of New Jersey. The Environmental commission provided several community wide educational programs at the site and was part of the Sustainable Jersey Program at the NJ League of Municipalities. Groups that were presented to include: ANJEC state wide conference on Stormwater Management in May, 2013, Community and Borough Council, April, 2013. The project was awarded ANJEC's 2013 Environmental Achievement award and was featured in NJNAHRO's (New Jersey Association of Housing and Redevelopment Officials) annual newsletter . Please see our full range of storm water materials at: <http://www.hightstownborough.com/boards-committees/environmental-commission/stormwater-management>

 [Innovative Community Project 1 \(Formerly Other\) Documentation](#)

 [Innovative Community Project 1 \(Formerly Other\) Documentation](#)

 [Innovative Community Project 1 \(Formerly Other\) Documentation](#)

 [Photo during ANJEC Stormwater presentation](#)

 [Rain Garden](#)

 [Sustainable Jersey Presentation](#)

Land Use & Transportation

Sustainable Land Use Pledge

10 Points

Bronze Priority

Silver Priority

Program Summary:

In 2017, the Hightstown adopted the Land Use Pledge, with the input of the Green Team, Environmental Commission and Planning Board. Hightstown continues its commitment to affordable housing, revitalized downtown areas, redevelopment of blighted areas and brownfield sites, protection of natural resources and economic opportunities for its residents. This year the Borough Council intends on working with the Planning Board, as well as its neighbor East Windsor Township on several land use priorities. The first is the rezoning efforts along Route 33 corridor for a hybrid form-based code. Hightstown is underway to implement the recommendations and standards from a 2012 study and state grant. The next project is continuing to meet with stakeholders and hold more public meetings surrounding the Lakefront Vision and Plan. The Borough amended its Master Plan after a public charrette and presentation was made to the Planning Board and Council. Finally, the Borough is working with the developer on the Rug Mill property, where the development will look to provide residents with their daily needs for family life, enrichment, recreation, and vocation. The plan design fosters walkability and activities at the street level with a public plaza, and a promenade Rocky Brook Creek edge that encourage personal interaction. From a regional perspective, these plans will bring to fruition an activated downtown waterfront experience that enhances the quality of life both in the borough and neighboring communities whose residents also use this downtown. Each of these also take advantage of Hightstown's already existing land use, structures, and natural resources to help the town become more sustainable. The impact of implementation will finally build upon and reinforce Hightstown as a designated "Town Center," located in the fringe planning area, from the 2001 State Development and Redevelopment Plan.

 [Sustainable Land Use Pledge Documentation](#)

 [Public Charrette in 2015](#)

 [Public Presentation after Public Charrettes](#)

 [Borough Distribution Memo](#)

Natural Resources

Environmental Commission

10 Points

Program Summary:

The Hightstown Environmental Commission (EC) has been established in Hightstown since the 1990s and is very active within the community. This past year was a productive year for the EC, as they have submitted the Community Forestry Management Plan, expanded the Tree Ordinance, planted additional trees, hosted the annual stream and town-wide clean ups as well as Arbor Day. The Borough spent nearly \$25,000 in funds to plant new trees and to maintain the town's tree resource in 2016. The members have participated in process for re-certification for Sustainable Jersey. The commission has also participated in townwide events, setup educational booths, and reached out to elementary schools for environmental educational programs and events. In addition, the borough implemented a new recycling program that delivered 96-gallon bins to each residence. The materials are picked up from natural gas vehicles only; and accepts all recyclable materials with the codes 1-7. Finally, the Borough was re-certified as a Tree City USA Community. Attached is the annual report for 2017. 2018 has gotten off to a good start with the EC selecting a new Chairperson to lead the ongoing efforts. Education and outreach will be expanded, as well as outreach to local schools and businesses. The EC has also renewed their participation in the Mercer County Sustainability Coalition. The Green team under this new leadership will push for Silver certification in 2018 by including members of every board and commission and involving the entire community in the effort. The EC also has an active Facebook page that provides an ongoing source of information to the community. <https://www.facebook.com/hightstownboroughEC/>

 [Hightstown Environmental Commission Established Sec.2-32](#)

 [Stream Clean-up and Arbor Day Poster](#)

 [Environmental Commission Accomplishments-2017-8](#)

 [2017 Meeting Minutes](#)

 [Environmental Commission Directory- 2018](#)

Environmental Commission Site Plan Review

10 Points

Program Summary:

Hightstown's Environmental Commission weighs in on applications received by the joint planning and zoning board. There has only been one Planning Board Application in 2017, which was received late last year and the public hearing took place in April 2017. Attached are the comments the Planning Board received from the Environmental Commission concerning the application – El Zorro LLC Use Variance Application. Keith LePrevost attended and spoke at the Planning board, raising the concerns for the neighboring property and the EC. Also attached is the 2012 storm water ordinance, which amended the previous ordinance, allowing for the EC to make written recommendations regarding non-structural methods to improve storm water management and refer the application to the engineer for further review. In 2018 the EC is reviewing a major site plan for a 273 unit development in the center of Hightstown. This development includes both sides of the Rocky Brook-over 1000 lineal feet of stream bank. Our review includes: energy efficiency, storm water, water conservation, trees, alternative energy sources and stream bank planning. The EC has also reviewed the proposed reconstruction plans for the Sunset and Maple Avenue reconstruction projects and submitted its comments to the Council and planning board before the project is finalized and bid.

 [EC/Housing Authority Comments to Planning Board](#)

 [Environmental Commission Stormwater Ordinance Variance Checklist](#)

 [Projects reviewed in 2017](#)

 [EC Comments to Planning Board, 2018-The Lofts at Hightstonw](#)

 [Projects reviewed in 2018 to date](#)

 [Sunset and Maple Avenue Review](#)

Natural Resource Inventory

20 Points

Bronze Priority

Silver Priority

Program Summary:

Hightstown received grants to complete its Natural Resources Inventory with the help of consultants from DVRPC and ANJEC. The Environmental Commission, Historic Preservation Commission, Planning and Zoning Board and Borough Council all reviewed and discussed this inventory publicly. It was unanimously approved by the Environmental Commission, Planning Board and Borough Council. In addition, the Planning and Zoning Board adopted this Inventory as an official Appendix to the Borough Master Plan, ensuring that it will be reviewed and used for development applications, instead of just sitting on a shelf. ERI: http://www.hightstownborough.com/report/Hightstown_ERI_2012-06-28.pdf Planning Board minutes adopting ERI: http://www.hightstownborough.com/minutes_planning_board/2012/06-11-2012.pdf

 [ERI Resolution](#)

Water Conservation Education Program

10 Points

Program Summary:

The Borough of Hightstown's Green team undertook water conservation as a goal and 2 year study project for 2018-2019. The goal of the project is to reduce the overall water usage in the borough by 10%. The project was inspired by the success of the water conservation efforts demonstrated by the local Housing Authority. This 100 unit apartment complex currently housed 203 residents ages newborn to 95. The historical water usage in the complex averaged just over 5 million gallons of water per year. Through education and simple water saving devices, low flow toilets, aerators and shower heads the complex was able to reduce consumption to a 3 year average of 3.5 million gallons per year. The Green team will be using social media including 2 Facebook pages: <https://www.facebook.com/hightstownboroughEC/> <https://www.facebook.com/hightstownsavewater/> We will also be distributing written materials at 6 events during 2018 and up to 8 events during 2019 including the Mercer GreenFest. Ongoing tracking of overall Borough water use will be compiled on a quarterly basis to gauge impact. Based on results we will expand our efforts to the other multifamily complexes, schools and businesses.

 [Water Conservation Worksheet](#)

 [Sample Distributed Materials](#)

 [HHA Case Study](#)

 [Environmental Fair Photo's- promoting water conservation](#)

Natural Resource Protection Ordinances

Environmental Assessment Ordinance

10 Points

Program Summary:

Hightstown has long recognized the need for environmental analysis of all development, given its value natural resources, particularly the waterways through the center of town. Even though it is urbanized, Hightstown has Species of Special Concern, such as herons, and has different soils and types of waterways, all of which need to be protected. Recently, Hightstown adopted a groundbreaking stormwater ordinance requiring stormwater review if more than 250 square feet of impervious cover or 1,000 square feet of soil is disturbed on any lot. All zoning permits and MLUL development applications are subject to this review. This ordinance goes beyond any environmental assessment in that real action to protect natural resources will be undertaken by reducing pollution from stormwater runoff. A copy of this ordinance is attached.

 [environmental assessment](#)

 [planning board minutes](#)

Tree Protection Ordinance

10 Points

Program Summary:

Hightstown has a tree protection ordinance in place and is a critical part of the Environmental Commission's goals. Included with this submission is the tree protection ordinance and a sample of our meeting minutes indicating a discussion on tree protection. Although our ordinance specifically states the "Public" property, the Shade Tree Official is almost always consulted by homeowners on removals of any substantial tree in the borough.

 tree protection ordinance

 EC minutes

 Tree Protection Response 07/12/2014

Tree & Woodlands Management

Community Forestry Plan and Tree Cover Goal

20 Points

Program Summary:

Attached is the Hightstown Community Forestry Management Plan (CFMP), which has been approved by the state. Please find attached the copy of the approval letter for the 2017-2021 CFMP, approved status snapshot from the state's website, and certificate of approval. Also attached, is the CFMP report for this year, tree canopy goal, proposed budget for the commission to the Hightstown governing body that has received approval. The budget details line items for the CFMP, including tree planting this year, with the help of the Department of Public Works, the Green Team, and volunteers, as well as updating the tree ordinance, and attending tree maintenance training. The Borough Shade Tree Official is a standing member of the Environmental Commission, gives a regular report on the status of all trees that need attention, pruning, removal and replanting at every Environmental Commission meeting. Hightstown prides itself on having an exception community forestry program, particularly for a small suburban community. In summary, the Green Team and Environmental Commission diligently completed the CFMP and certification through 2021. This latest state approval exemplifies the borough's continued participation and strong understanding of the value that the CFMP brings to the borough.

 Hightstown Certificate 2017-2021

 Community Forestry Plan - State Letter

 Community Forestry Plan 2017-2022 approval letter

 Community Forestry Plan- 2017-2022

 Tree Cover Goal Documentation

 2017 Accreditation Report

Tree Hazard Inventory

10 Points

Program Summary:

Hightstown, through its Shade Tree Program, has been working with volunteers to complete a tree inventory project. The inventory includes locations of all Borough street trees, the condition of the tree and the tree type. Attached is a summary of the work we have done in identifying the tree distribution and the condition of the Borough's trees. This past spring all the trees were finally inventoried and the information is now ready to be documented in an excel spreadsheet. The town has 16.04 miles of road, with 14.24 miles currently inventoried. The attached document reflects the results of the inventory. Given the decline in several species in the Borough, notably the Elms and Oaks, the EC has worked with the Borough Council and Public works to increase the EC budget for tree planting and maintenance. We are currently addressing and prioritizing our tree hazards so that we may accomplish the worst problems first, while

still maintaining budget for normal pruning.

 [Tree Hazard Inventory](#)

 [Tree Assessment and inventory](#)

 [Tree Hazard Map](#)

Tree Maintenance Programs

10 Points

Program Summary:

Through the efforts of our Shade Tree Official, the Environmental Commission and the Department of Public Works, the Borough of Hightstown has in place a healthy tree inventory, which is constantly monitored. Hightstown's Shade Tree Official and employees at the Department of Public Works, as well as volunteers with the Hightstown Environmental Commission, work throughout the year to ensure that our trees are monitored for signs of damage or disease. The attached documents reflect both the hours of work and the specific tasks associated with our ongoing tree maintenance program in the year 2017. Larger tree maintenance and removals are done by contract.

 [Tree Maintenance 2017](#)

 [Contract Tree Maintenance](#)

 [Detail of Tree Maintenance 2017](#)

Tree Planting Programs

10 Points

Program Summary:

The Borough of Hightstown through the Environmental Commission had a tremendous tree planting year with over 29 trees planted, mainly to replace street trees that were damaged or removed during construction. Hightstown has a strict ordinance requiring the replanting of trees if they are removed by the Borough. Green Team, Shade Tree Official, and Environmental Commission members consult with landowners to individual tree planting of native species that keep the character of each neighborhood. This individualized attention has been ongoing for at least 5 years. The Shade Tree Official, as a Borough official, is charged with continuing this ambitious program, which has continued to work well. Tree Maintenance and Replanting: <http://168.144.49.169/ordinances/ordinance/default.aspx> Our tree maintenance program includes mulching the trees annually, gator bags for continuous watering for the first 12 months and regular weeding and pruning to improve shape. The trees are fertilized in the third year. The attached sheets are the actual order sheets for the trees that were purchased and installed in 2017. Our tree planting program continues in 2018 with the annual Arbor day tree planting shown in photo below and will be followed by the planting of 13 street trees on Sunset and Maple Avenue. We consistently are working to increase our tree cover to the goal of 25%.

 [Tree Planting Documentation](#)

 [Tree Planting Programs Documentation](#)

 [Tree Planting Programs Documentation](#)

 [Tree Planting 2018](#)

Green Purchasing Program

Adopt a Green Purchasing Policy by Resolution

5 Points

Program Summary:

The Borough of Hightstown has always been committed to using our resources carefully. We have established purchasing policy's that promote "Green" purchasing whenever possible. Like most policy manuals, our purchasing

manual is an evolving document, always looking for better, more efficient and greener ways to run our Borough. On May 21st, the Borough Council passed by resolution a reaffirmation of our Green Purchasing policy's and our commitment to continue this pursuit whenever possible.

 [Purchasing Manual](#)

 [Green Purchasing Policy and Resolution](#)

Recycled Paper

10 Points

Program Summary:

Hightstown Borough 's municipal purchasing personnel including the administrator, clerk, deputy clerk, and administrative assistants are well aware of utilizing post-consumer recycled content. Green purchasing has been ongoing within the borough for several years as it has a dual benefit of reduced prices and is environmentally sound. Attached is the purchase orders from 2017 and 2018 thus far, which include items such as recycled copier paper, toner cartridges, colored paper, file folders, desk materials, and mailing labels. Each item that highlights recycled goods has the universal Recycle symbol next to the purchase price.

 [Recycled Paper Documentation - Purchase Orders from 2017](#)

 [Additional Purchase orders](#)

Access to Public Information

Digitizing Public Information

10 Points

Program Summary:

The Borough of Hightstown has an extensive website that has been developed over several years. A major impetus was the flooding of the Borough Hall in 2011. After that event, a major effort was made to have all of the Borough's documents digitized and placed on the Web. In 2018 a new site was launched that is simpler to navigate and more detailed. We now have not only current information from all departments, boards and commissions, but also years worth of historical data.

 [Revised Digitizing Public Information Worksheet](#)

Waste Management

Prescription Drug Safety and Disposal

10 Points

Bronze Priority

Silver Priority

Program Summary:

The Borough of Hightstown and West Windsor Townships has a written public health services shared services contract. Part of that agreement involves promotion of health and environmental safety issues such as proper disposal of medications. The contract is not specific for disposal of Rx drugs, but it is one of the areas the communities have promoted awareness around. There are drop boxes located throughout Mercer County that are accessible to all individuals without the need for an interlocal contract or related to residency. We have promoted the locations. In addition, Hightstown is involved with a prescription drop off program that is a one day event where residents can drop off prescription drugs at police headquarters during set hours. This program is called "Operation Take Back" and is sponsored by the Drug Enforcement Administration. This event occurs twice a year, generally on Saturdays. It requires an officer to be at police headquarters during the set hours to collect the medication. Hightstown recently held a take back initiative collection on April 29, 2017 and April 28th, 2018 for unused or expired prescription medication for safe disposal. This flyer and information is attached as well. Information on the amounts of prescription medications

collected are difficult to ascertain, we were told that information is available by request. We estimated approximately 50 residents stopped in 2017 and 42 in 2018 and disposed of medications. We can not ascertain the exact weight of the medicines. The main page of the Borough website has a link for safe household medication disposal with information, directions and brochures. <https://www.hightstownpolice.com/project-medicine-drop/> Please note that we take part in the larger national and state events, our medication drop box is available to residents 24 hours a day, 7 days a week all year long. It is clearly advertised- recently in the quarterly news letter from the borough included below.

 [Safe Disposal Documentation](#)

 [Safe Meds Disposal tri fold](#)

 [Operation Take Back in Hightstown](#)

 [Prescription Drug Safety and Disposal Dropbox 2017 Photo](#)

 [Hightstown, August Newsletter\(see page 2\)](#)

 [Bulk Documentation on collection](#)

Recycling

Community Paper Shredding Day

5 Points

Program Summary:

The Hightstown Environmental Commission has been hosting Shredding Events since 2013. In 2018 our shredding event was held during the morning of our annual stream clean-up. The event was located in the middle of Downtown, in the Borough parking lot adjacent to the Tavern on the Lake. Saturday, April 21st was a beautiful sunny warm spring day which made it a perfect day to be outdoors with our neighbors. We had the shredding truck available from 9:00AM to 12:00PM. We had approximately 50 local residents and 4 businesses show up and bring material. In total we shredding 3050 pounds of paper in the two hour period the shredder was available. The residents and business's were very thankful and plans are already underway for next years event.

 [Community Paper Shredding Day Poster](#)

 [Shredding Event Photo](#)

Household Hazardous Waste

10 Points

Program Summary:

The Borough of Hightstown has in their maintenance yard very specific recycling areas for electronics, waste motor oil and antifreeze. These areas are clearly marked with signage and are publicized on the Borough Website: <http://www.hightstownborough.com/public-works/>

 [Map of Hazardous waste recycling areas](#)

 [Recycling Tonnage Report showing hazardous materials](#)

 [Electronics Recycling Guidelines](#)

 [Waste Oil Disposal area](#)

 [Electronics Disposal Site](#)

 [Recycling Report](#)