



# TOWN OF VERNON

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### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

November 4, 2019

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**Daniel A. Champagne**  
*Mayor*

**Michael J. Purcaro**  
*Town Administrator*

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*Assistant Town Administrator*

## VERNON HONORED WITH SUSTAINABLE CT CERTIFICATION

### *Town Achieves Highest Level of Certification*

**(VERNON)** – Mayor Daniel A. Champagne announced today that Vernon is among a select group of Connecticut municipalities to be recognized for achieving certification as a Sustainable CT community. The town met rigorous standards in a broad range of sustainability accomplishments on its first attempt to qualify for the prestigious ‘Silver’ certification, the highest certification level possible.

Sustainable CT, a statewide initiative that inspires and supports communities in becoming more efficient, resilient, and inclusive, announced its 2019 certified communities this week. Certification lasts 3 years, with the state’s first cohort of municipalities certified in 2018. Collectively, forty-seven municipalities, or approximately 28% of the state’s communities, have earned Sustainable CT certification. Of that, only fourteen, or approximately 1%, have achieved ‘Silver’ certification. Certified communities span every county and include some of Connecticut’s largest cities and smallest towns.

“Participating in the Sustainable CT certification process required that we evaluate key sustainability indicators to measure our success in promoting the health and well-being of our community and protecting our natural and cultural resources,” said Mayor Champagne. “Our ‘Silver’ certification benchmark demonstrates our commitment to sustainability and will ensure that Vernon remains a vibrant, healthy, resilient community in the future.”

“Congratulations to our 2019 certified Sustainable CT communities,” said Lynn Stoddard, Executive Director of the Institute for Sustainable Energy at Eastern Connecticut State University, which administers the program. “We are inspired by your leadership and eager to share your accomplishments in building efficient, thriving, and resilient communities.”

In its application for Sustainable CT certification, Vernon demonstrated significant achievements in nine sustainable impact areas ranging from inclusive community building, thriving local economies, and vibrant arts and culture to clean transportation and diverse housing.

“The year-long certification process encouraged us to expand our vision and undertake meaningful actions in a variety of areas,” said Michael Purcaro, Town Administrator. “Some of these areas included launching a town-wide solar power campaign, creating a municipal brownfields inventory, installing an electric vehicle charging station, implementing a residential composting program for income-eligible participants, and introducing the “My Vernon” art program for youth, which uses art to inspire appreciation for and build a sense of community in the Town. These activities broadened and strengthened our working relationships with schools, boards, commissions, staff, and the community. I thank all of our stakeholders for their contributions to this remarkable achievement.”

“Vernon’s Energy Improvement District Board (EIDB) was fortunate to serve the Town as the local Sustainable Team advisors, ensuring that we forged local connections and embraced the strengths that community members bring to our town,” said Jeff Boulrice, EIDB Chairman.

“Vernon joins a host of neighboring communities that desire to continually become more sustainable,” said Shaun Gately, Interim Town Planner, and Economic Development Coordinator. “Engaging in sustainable activities challenge us to explore new and more effective ways to ‘do business’ in Vernon, and I am proud to be a part of it.”

## **ABOUT SUSTAINABLE CT**

The Sustainable CT program is managed under the leadership of the Institute for Sustainable Energy at Eastern Connecticut State University. Sustainable CT is philanthropically funded, with strong support from its three founding funders: the Emily Hall Tremaine Foundation, the Common Sense Fund, and the Smart Seed Fund.

Vernon and other certified communities will be recognized on December 3, 2019 at the Annual Convention of the Connecticut Conference of Municipalities.

For more information on the Sustainable CT program and Vernon’s certification award, visit [www.sustainablect.org](http://www.sustainablect.org).

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