

# Action Plan for a Sustainable Summit



## City of Summit, N.J. June 2008

- Energy in the Built Environment
- Green Building Practices
- Transportation & Circulation
- Water: Usage & Protection
- Solid Waste & Recycling
- Green Canopy & Open Space
- Green Purchasing
- Education & Communication
- Implementation & Governance



PREPARED BY THE MAYOR'S SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY TASK FORCE



## Introduction

### ***Summit's Sustainable Action Plan***

In response to an increasing concern about how our decisions and actions impact the environment, the City of Summit has joined a growing number of communities in the United States pledging to be more environmentally-sensitive and "sustainable." Sustainability, simply put, is protecting our natural resources while meeting the needs of the present generation without compromising those of future generations. Continuing a tradition of thoughtful stewardship of our community, in January 2007 Mayor Glatt and Common Council joined the more than 850 communities nationwide who have signed the U.S. Mayors Climate Protection Agreement, pledging to do our part by taking specific actions here in Summit. Although we have begun to make positive changes already in Summit, some of our trends are still negative: from 2006-2007, our electricity use increased, and over the past three years, our recycling rates went down instead of up. To meet the challenge of sustainability, the Mayor's Sustainable Community Task Force has created this Action Plan as a guide to the community for existing and planned initiatives.

This Action Plan offers specific steps that Summit officials, schools, businesses, industries and residents can take to become more sustainable. If implemented with commitment and perseverance, this plan will result in a substantial reduction of harmful emissions, such as carbon dioxide and other pollutants; lower, more efficient and cost-effective energy use; cleaner water and better water management; preservation of our beautiful trees and open spaces; a less congested, more walkable and economically vibrant downtown; and healthier residents. In short, together we can and will see a more "Sustainable Summit."

### ***Vision Statement***

The City of Summit will continue to invest in preserving and improving its natural resources and community well-being. With the input and active participation of all segments of the community, Summit will undertake a concerted, step-by-step process to reduce our impact on the environment, manage development, and take actions to ensure our quality of life for this generation and those to come. Summit is committed to dedicating resources, adopting policies and practices, and promoting lifelong learning in our homes, workplaces, schools, places of worship and community organizations that will advance and support our ongoing proactive initiative toward becoming a more sustainable community.

### ***Background***

This Action Plan was developed by the Task Force in collaboration with the community. Following the presentation of the June 2007 "*Report and Recommendations on Developing a Sustainable Master Plan for Summit*," which examined Summit's impact on the environment and provided a detailed survey of the best sustainability practices from across the country, the Task Force undertook a strong community outreach program, jointly funded by the City of Summit and a grant from the Association for New Jersey Environmental Commissions. A group of 60 Summit leaders served as an Advisory Group and hundreds of residents participated in approximately 25 community meetings organized to discuss how Summit could become more sustainable. These meetings included neighborhood groups, open public forums, PTA meetings, and a meeting of the local business community organized by the Suburban Chambers of Commerce.

More than 500 residents completed surveys online or on paper in which public opinion was measured, ideas were tested and suggestions were solicited. The survey was advertised through posters, newspaper articles, announcements at public meetings, and a public service announcement on Channel 36 produced by Summit High School students. Additionally, Summit's first Greenfest was held on May 10, 2008. Focused on sustainability, this well-attended and informative event was designed to increase public awareness and bring useful information to residents to help them make sustainable choices.

### ***Reading This Report***

In all the sections, the action steps are organized by topic area, including energy, building practices, transportation, water, recycling, trees, "green" purchasing, education, and implementation.

- "Priority Action Steps" on pages 3-4 is a quick guide to specific actions that are highly recommended because they can be implemented soon, in a cost-effective way, with high positive environmental impact.
- "Overview of All Action Steps," beginning on page 5, is a list of all action steps, to be implemented now and on a more extended timetable.
- "In Depth: Objectives, Targets and Detailed Action Steps," beginning on page 15, is a comprehensive examination of each of the action steps, including justification as well as how and in what timeframe each should be implemented.
- The Appendices, beginning on page 59, contain information to explain and support aspects of the Action Plan.

### ***How Summit Can "Walk the Sustainability Talk"***

The challenge for government, business, and individuals is great--how do we incorporate sustainable practices into ongoing operations and our everyday activities? To focus and support our community's efforts to implement this Action Plan, we recommend that one of the standing committees of the Common Council expand its mission to assume a lead role for sustainability. Additionally, a new Sustainability Advisory Committee will provide valuable assistance to the Mayor, the Common Council and to other Summit-based committees and commissions who have a role in issues that relate to sustainability. The Sustainability Advisory Committee will:

- Coordinate the implementation of the Action Plan
- Develop methods to monitor and evaluate progress on the Action Plan
- Regularly assess the plan's effectiveness and recommend modifications and improvements to respond to local conditions and regulatory changes

The citizens of Summit have always operated with an eye to the future. The challenge now is to address the issues of sustainability while preserving the best aspects of our community. Deciding what to do first can be challenging, yet doing nothing or putting off decisions is not a realistic option, given the need to preserve our natural resources, the overwhelming scientific evidence on climate change, and the economics of energy use. We encourage everyone living and working in Summit to make sustainability a priority.

***-- The Mayor's Sustainable Community Task Force***

Priority Action Steps	Municipality	Residents	Businesses	Schools	Partner/Civic Organizations	Page
	●	●	●	●	●	
<b>A. Energy in the Built Environment</b>						
A-1 Promote enrollment in NJ CleanPower Choice Program, sponsored by the New Jersey Board of Public Utilities	●	●	●	●	●	15
A-2 Promote residential use of NJ Clean Energy’s Home Performance with ENERGY STAR Measured Audit or use of online assessment tool	●	●				16
A-3 Promote purchase by homeowners, businesses/landlords, and municipality of ENERGY STAR appliances and electrical equipment, if available, when purchasing new items or replacing old ones	●	●	●	●		17
A-4 Use Compact Fluorescent (CFL) bulbs, turn out lights when not in use, and if possible, increase LED (light emitting diode) lighting	●	●	●	●	●	17
A-5 Take steps now to reduce energy consumption--set thermostats 2° lower in winter and 2° higher in summer; repair or replace old windows; and unplug appliances/chargers that draw energy when not in use	●	●	●	●	●	18
<b>B. Green Building Practices</b>						
B-4 Encourage Common Council to adopt a resolution endorsing and promoting sustainable building and development practices in Summit	●	●	●	●	●	23
B-6 In order to obtain a building permit, require completion of a one-page form describing the sustainability of the project, and listing proposed green energy and water conservation measures	●	●	●	●		24
B-8 Lobby state legislators to amend the building code to increase energy efficiency in buildings and add requirements for green issues	●	●			●	25
<b>C. Transportation and Circulation</b>						
C-1 Decrease number of car trips and miles driven by people living and working in Summit; for trips less than a mile, walk or ride a bicycle if feasible	●	●	●	●	●	27
C-2. Continue to develop means to facilitate and encourage walking, bicycling, and carpooling	●	●	●	●	●	27
C-5 Encourage Summit residents and businesses, when buying new or used vehicles, to choose vehicles that average 35 mpg or better	●	●	●			30
C-8 Work with other municipalities to develop statewide disincentives for auto trips and policy to improve and increase public transportation options and efficiency	●				●	31
<b>D. Water: Usage and Protection from Contaminants</b>						
D-1 Decrease water use by homes, businesses, and the municipality	●	●	●	●	●	33
D-4 Set up sample projects to demonstrate on-site management of storm water including a rain garden, rain barrels, and others	●			●	●	35
D-6 Use green landscaping practices, that is, use native species, reduce lawn area, and use practices that require less watering and less pesticide and herbicide use	●	●	●	●	●	35

Priority Action Steps <i>(continued)</i>	Municipality	Residents	Businesses	Schools	Partner/Civic Organizations	Page
	●	●	●	●	●	
<b>E. Solid Waste and Recycling</b>						
E-1 Reduce consumption of non-recyclable, toxic and unnecessary materials by residents, businesses, schools and the City	●	●	●	●	●	39
E-2 Implement system-wide changes in garbage collection and add incentive programs to decrease total solid waste and increase recycling	●	●	●	●		40
E-3 Start Freecycling program via a user-friendly website (linked to the City website) and/or at the Recycling Center/Transfer Station or at another location	●	●			●	41
<b>F. Tree Canopy and Open Space</b>						
F-1 Review and enhance Summit’s Shade Tree Ordinance to consider the preservation of additional trees	●				●	45
F-2 Discourage tree removal by developers, contractors, and homeowners; provide incentives for developers and contractors to design around existing vegetation	●	●	●	●	●	45
<b>G. Green Purchasing</b>						
G-1 Require development by the City and Board of Education of a comprehensive environmentally preferred purchasing (EPP) program	●			●		49
G-3 Encourage development of environmentally preferred purchasing (EPP) programs by businesses and industry			●			50
G-4 Encourage residents to select green products whenever possible.	●	●			●	51
<b>H. Education and Communication</b>						
H-3 Create a comprehensive, ongoing publicity plan to promote sustainability in Summit; launch and maintain a community-wide energy awareness and training campaign to promote energy usage reductions and efficiency	●	●	●	●	●	54
H-4 Promote Summit as a green shopping destination easily reached by public transportation, and develop green branding program for Summit businesses and/or a green directory of businesses	●		●		●	55
<b>I. Implementation and Governance</b>						
I-1 Incorporate sustainability into one of the Common Council Standing Committees	●					57
I-2 Establish a Sustainability Advisory Committee (SAC)	●					57
<b><i>To see a calculation of the carbon savings that could be obtained from the implementation of the Priority Action Steps, see Appendix B.</i></b>						

# Overview of All Action Steps

## A. Energy in the Built Environment

### Objectives

Reduce greenhouse gas emissions and energy loss in new and existing buildings and homes

Reduce energy use by increasing energy efficiency and the percentage of energy derived from renewable sources

### Targets

Reduce greenhouse gas emissions (GHG) from all Summit buildings by 20% by 2015

Increase percentage of Summit residences enrolled in NJ Clean Power Choice Program to 3% by the end of 2008, with additional yearly increases to be determined on a year-to-year basis

Increase percentage of renewable energy used to 10% of Summit's total energy use by 2015, with additional yearly increases to be determined on a year-to-year basis

Increase to 10% the number of Summit residences taking action based on the results of a Home Performance with ENERGY STAR Assessment (audit) by 2010, with additional increases to be determined on a year-to-year basis

Action Steps	Municipality	Residents	Businesses	Schools	Partner/Civic Organization	Page
	●	●	●	●	●	
A-1 Promote enrollment in NJ CleanPower Choice Program, sponsored by the New Jersey Board of Public Utilities	●	●	●	●	●	15
A-2 Promote residential use of NJ Clean Energy's Home Performance with ENERGY STAR Measured Audit or use of online assessment tool	●	●				16
A-3 Promote purchase by homeowners, businesses/landlords, and municipality of ENERGY STAR appliances and electrical equipment, if available, when purchasing new items or replacing old ones	●	●	●	●		17
A-4 Use Compact Fluorescent (CFL) bulbs, turn out lights when not in use, and if possible, increase LED (light emitting diode) lighting	●	●	●	●	●	17
A-5 Take steps now to reduce energy consumption--set thermostats 2° lower in winter and 2° higher in summer; repair or replace old windows; unplug appliances/chargers that draw energy when not in use	●	●	●	●	●	18
A-6 Lobby energy companies and legislators to expand real-time pricing availability, support requirement of minimum percentages of renewable energy, and to promote investment in renewable energy in NJ	●	●				18
A-7 Promote a line item of non-renewable energy use (gas, electric, and oil) for the last year in all real estate listings of homes in Summit	●	●				19
A-8 Expand efforts to install solar energy units on municipal buildings	●					19
A-9 Encourage and educate commercial and industrial users on the benefits of the New Jersey SmartStart Buildings program, sponsored by the NJ Board of Public Utilities' Clean Energy Program.	●		●		●	19
A-10 Launch and maintain a community-wide energy awareness and training campaign to promote energy usage reductions and efficiency	●	●	●	●	●	20
A-11 Encourage a decrease in the use of leaf blowers, lawn mowers and snow blowers, and an increase in the use of clothes lines	●	●			●	20

# Overview of All Action Steps *(continued)*

## B. Green Building Practices

### Objectives

Encourage and promote green building practices, defined as high performance and energy efficient design and construction methods relating to site conditions, water quality, energy use, material selection and indoor environment, which promote the health and well-being of residents and occupants

Reduce greenhouse gas emissions and energy loss in new homes and other new buildings

Reduce energy use by increasing energy efficiency and conservation; increase the percentage of energy derived from renewable sources

Increase use of recycled and renewable materials in new construction and renovation projects; reduce construction waste

### Targets

Reduce greenhouse gas emissions (GHG) in new buildings, including new homes, starting now, so as to have a 30% reduction in carbon footprint by 2012 and a zero carbon footprint in buildings constructed after 2025

Encourage all new construction valued at \$50,000 or more to meet LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) or equivalent standards by 2012

Reduce construction waste so that 60% of construction waste is recycled by 2012

Action Steps	Municipality	Residents	Businesses	Schools	Partner/Civic Organization	Page
	●	●	●	●	●	
B-1 Promote construction techniques that earn the ENERGY STAR and WaterSense labels and installation of only ENERGY STAR and WaterSense equipment, if available, in new construction	●	●	●	●	●	21
B-2 Promote use of green and recycled building materials in new construction, renovation, and maintenance by developers, residents, business owners, the City, and public schools	●	●	●	●	●	22
B-3 Develop and promulgate guidelines and incentives for green building through compliance with LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) standards for new construction and renovation	●		●			22
B-4 Encourage Common Council to adopt a resolution endorsing and promoting sustainable building and development practices in Summit	●	●	●	●	●	23
B-5 Require waste management plan for recycling and/or reuse of 60 percent of all construction and demolition waste generated in projects larger than \$25,000	●	●	●	●		23
B-6 In order to obtain a building permit, require completion of a one-page form describing the sustainability of the project, and listing proposed green energy and water conservation measures	●	●	●	●		24
B-7 Require use of the ENERGY STAR Buildings Target Finder to establish an energy budget (BTU/square foot/year) for all new building proposed for Summit	●	●	●	●		24
B-8 Lobby state legislators to amend the building code to increase energy efficiency in buildings, add requirements for other green issues	●	●			●	25

# Overview of All Action Steps *(continued)*

## C. Transportation and Circulation

### Objective

Reduce transportation fuel use, through reduced automobile use and increased fuel efficiency

### Target

Reduce gasoline consumption by Summit residents, businesses, and the municipality by 20% by 2015

Action Steps	Municipality	Residents	Businesses	Schools	Partner/Civic Organization	Page
	●	●	●	●	●	
C-1 Decrease number of car trips and miles driven by people living and working in Summit; for trips less than a mile, walk or ride a bicycle if feasible	●	●	●	●	●	27
C-2 Continue to develop means to facilitate and encourage walking, bicycling, and carpooling	●	●	●	●	●	27
C-3. Adopt an anti-idling ordinance	●					29
C-4 Determine and pursue best method for public transportation within Summit	●	●	●		●	29
C-5 Encourage Summit residents and businesses, when buying new or used vehicles, to choose vehicles that average 35 miles per gallon or better	●	●	●	●		30
C-6 Decrease gasoline use and pollution by Summit municipal vehicles, through pollution control, consideration of use of bio-diesel fuels, and as the fleet turns over, encourage purchase of vehicles with improved fuel efficiency	●					30
C-7 Increase use of public transportation—trains and buses—to travel to and from Summit	●	●	●		●	31
C-8 Work with other municipalities to develop statewide disincentives for auto trips and policy to improve and increase public transportation options and efficiency	●				●	31

# Overview of All Action Steps *(continued)*

## D. Water: Usage and Protection from Contaminants

### Objective

To conserve water through aquifer recharge and water conservation, and improve water quality through reduction in toxics from rainwater runoff and wastewater

### Targets

Decrease the annual rate of municipal, residential, commercial and industrial water use by 20% by 2015, as measured by NJ American Water Company

Improve the quality of water in Summit waterways, as measured by DEP stream monitoring, with a 20% decrease in net toxins downstream by 2015

Increase to 20% the number of Summit homes which are managing storm water on-site by 2015

Promote compliance with WaterSense criteria in all new construction in Summit by 2015

Action Steps	Municipality	Residents	Businesses	Schools	Partner/Civic Organization	Page
	●	●	●	●	●	
D-1 Decrease water use by homes, businesses, and the municipality	●	●	●	●	●	33
D-2 Revise Certificate of Occupancy criteria, where permissible, to include best practices in water usage, including EPA WaterSense criteria such as low-flow showerheads, faucets and toilets	●					34
D-3 Encourage installation of water conservation measures such as greywater processing or rainwater capture cisterns/retention pits and dry wells by waiving City permitting fees	●	●	●	●		34
D-4 Set up sample projects to demonstrate on-site management of storm water including a rain garden, rain barrels, re-direction of downspouts, and porous paving	●			●	●	35
D-5 Revise Certificate of Occupancy criteria, where permissible, to include best practices in storm water management	●	●	●	●		35
D-6 Use green landscaping practices, that, is use native species, reduce lawn area, and use practices that require less watering and less pesticide and herbicide use	●	●	●	●	●	35
D-7 Document methods used and sectors treated with Integrated Pest Management by the City	●			●		36
D-8 Develop criteria for designation of Pesticide-free zone (ladybug sign), and organize placement of the signs	●				●	37
D-9 Conduct an evaluation of the status of the water infrastructure of Summit	●					37

# Overview of All Action Steps *(continued)*

## E. Solid Waste and Recycling

### Objectives

Decrease solid waste and encourage best use of resources through a reduce-reuse-recycle philosophy

Improve data collection of total tonnage of solid waste disposed and recycled by businesses and industry

### Targets

Exceed NJDEP guidelines, which state that 50% of Municipal Solid Waste, MSW (Type 10), must be diverted from the waste stream by 2012

Divert 75% of MSW from the waste stream by 2020

Divert 35% of all other types of solid waste—other than MSW (Type 10)—by 2012

Action Steps	Municipality	Residents	Businesses	Schools	Partner/Civic Organization	Page
	●	●	●	●	●	
E-1 Reduce consumption of non-recyclable, toxic and unnecessary materials by residents, businesses, schools and the City	●	●	●	●	●	39
E-2 Implement system-wide changes in garbage collection and add incentive programs to decrease total solid waste and increase recycling	●	●	●	●		40
E-3 Start Freecycling program via a user-friendly website (linked to the city website) and/or at the Recycling Center/Transfer Station or at another location	●	●			●	41
E-4 Continue to implement the Recycling Advisory Committee initiatives to increase/ encourage/ enable recycling and re-use throughout Summit	●	●	●	●		41
E-5 Investigate implementing shared services with the City and businesses to facilitate recycling	●		●			42
E-6 If the above efforts fail to reach the targets above, develop means of enforcing the NJ State recycling law for City businesses	●					42
E-7 Develop a website linked to the City's website and an ongoing publicity campaign to promote and educate about goals to reduce/reuse/recycle	●					43
E-8 Require waste management plan for recycling and/or reuse of sixty percent of all construction and demolition waste generated in projects larger than \$25,000	●	●	●	●		43
E-9 Encourage at-home composting of kitchen and yard waste, and consider development by City of a food composting program for residents and/or businesses (restaurants)	●	●	●		●	43
E-10 Consider a PAYT, Pay As You Throw, Program to dispose of Summit's municipal solid waste (MSW) if above steps fail to reach targets	●	●	●	●	●	43

# Overview of All Action Steps *(continued)*

## F. Tree Canopy and Open Space

### Objectives

Continue to promote the preservation of green space in and around the City of Summit

“Promote a sustainable community forest by encouraging the protection and replacement of trees and become more proactive in the management and care of our trees” *(from Summit’s Community Forestry Management Plan)*

### Targets

Maintain current tree canopy and increase if possible

Maintain publicly-owned green space and increase when there is the opportunity to do so

Action Steps	Municipality	Residents	Businesses	Schools	Partner/Civic Organization	Page
	●	●	●	●	●	
F-1 Review and enhance Summit’s Shade Tree Ordinance to consider the preservation of additional trees	●				●	45
F-2 Discourage tree removal by developers, contractors, and homeowners; provide incentives for developers and contractors to design around existing vegetation	●	●	●	●	●	45
F-3 Plant trees where appropriate, and meet or exceed City standards for reducing tree removal by residents, businesses and the City	●	●	●	●	●	46
F-4 Develop neighborhood native-plant gardens on City property (rights of way, medians, other similar public spaces)	●	●	●	●	●	46
F-5 Increase recreation access to the Passaic River and explore the creation of a linear park along the River	●		●			46
F-6 Promote use of native species and the replacement of invasive species with appropriate trees and vegetation	●	●	●	●	●	47

# Overview of All Action Steps *(continued)*

## G. Green Purchasing

### Objectives

Encourage a program for Green Purchasing, or Environmentally Preferred Purchasing (EPP), to be adopted by the City and the Board of Education

Encourage residents, businesses, and industry to make purchases that are increasingly environmentally friendly

### Targets

Increase to half all purchases made by the City and BOE meeting EPP guidelines by 2012

Increase to 75% all purchases made by the City and BOE meeting EPP guidelines by 2015

Increase green purchasing choices for Summit shoppers, so that by 2015 these options are the first choice for most shoppers

Action Steps	Municipality	Residents	Businesses	Schools	Partner/Civic Organization	Page
	●	●	●	●	●	
G-1 Require development by the City and Board of Education (BOE) of a comprehensive environmentally preferred purchasing (EPP) program	●			●		49
G-2 Decrease gasoline use and pollution by Summit municipal vehicles, through pollution control, consideration of use of bio-diesel fuels, and as the fleet turns over, encourage purchase of vehicles with improved fuel efficiency	●					50
G-3 Encourage development of environmentally preferred purchasing (EPP) programs by businesses and industry			●			50
G-4 Encourage residents to select green products whenever possible	●	●			●	51

# Overview of All Action Steps *(continued)*

## H. Education and Communication

### Objectives

Develop and disseminate accurate and timely information in an easily accessible format to people in residential, commercial, industrial and municipal sectors to inform them about best practices, and to encourage them to consider environmental sustainability when making municipal, commercial, industrial and residential decisions

Design and execute a broad-based and ongoing plan to engage residents, educators, City officials, businesses and industry in learning and decision making about actions to safeguard and improve the environment and the quality of life in Summit

### Target

The involvement and knowledge of Summit will be evidenced by the following indicators:

- Decrease in building-related energy use
- Decrease in automobile miles driven; increase in fuel efficiency of our vehicles
- Decrease in water consumption, wastewater runoff, and increase in environmentally-friendly landscaping methods
- Decrease in non-recycled solid waste
- Increase in purchase of green products

Action Steps	Municipality	Residents	Businesses	Schools	Partner/Civic Organization	Page
	●	●	●	●	●	
H-1 Develop a user-friendly, comprehensive website, linked to the Summit municipal web site, dedicated to sustainability in Summit	●	●	●	●	●	53
H-2 Continue to produce and support the annual Greenfest in downtown Summit	●	●	●	●	●	53
H-3 Create a comprehensive, ongoing publicity plan to promote sustainability in Summit; launch and maintain a community-wide energy awareness and training campaign to promote energy usage reductions and efficiency	●	●	●	●	●	54
H-4 Promote Summit as a green shopping destination easily reached by public transportation, and develop a green branding program for Summit businesses and/or a green directory of businesses	●		●		●	55
H-5 Encourage the Summit Board of Education and private schools and lobby the state to increase sustainability-related curriculum at all levels of education	●			●		55

# Overview of All Action Steps *(continued)*

## I. Implementation and Governance

### Objective

Create a structure that will support community volunteers, existing committees, City staff and elected officials to enable a long term sustainability effort

Action Steps	Municipality	Residents	Businesses	Schools	Partner/Civic Organization	Page
	●	●	●	●	●	
I-1 Incorporate sustainability into one of the Common Council Standing Committees	●					57
I-2 Establish a Sustainability Advisory Committee (SAC)	●					57