



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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STAFFORD JOINS SUSTAINABLE CT

STAFFORD, CONN. – On July 2nd, the Town of Stafford registered to join a growing number of communities across the state participating in Sustainable CT, an exciting program to support Connecticut's cities and towns. The statewide initiative, created by towns for towns, includes a detailed menu of sustainability best practices, tools and resources, peer learning, and recognition. Over 60% of Connecticut's municipalities are now registered to participate in Sustainable CT. The third cohort of certified communities was recently announced. Collectively over 27% of the state's cities and towns have achieved certification.

"We're elated to bring Sustainable CT to Stafford, an innovative program that not only supports civic-minded sustainability achievements, but inspires us to become resilient through actionable goals," says First Selectman Mary Mitta. "As we implement sustainable actions to achieve points toward certification, we encourage anyone who works or lives in Stafford to become involved in this wide-ranging process that will make our community a more vibrant place for current and future residents."

The Sustainable CT platform supports a broad range of actions, such as improving watershed management, supporting arts and creative culture, reducing energy use and increasing renewable energy, implementing "complete streets" (streets that meet the needs of walkers and bikers as well as cars), improving recycling programs, assessing climate vulnerability, supporting local businesses, and providing efficient and diverse housing options. There is no cost to participate and communities voluntarily select actions that meet their unique, local character and long-term vision. After successful implementation of a variety of actions, municipalities are eligible for Sustainable CT certification.

The initiative was developed under the leadership of the Institute for Sustainable Energy at Eastern Connecticut State University in partnership with the Connecticut Conference of Municipalities. Three Connecticut philanthropies - The Emily Hall Tremaine Foundation, the Smart Seed Fund, and the Common Sense Fund – have supported the program's development and launch.

"We are thrilled that Stafford has passed a resolution to join Sustainable CT. The program builds on many current success stories in our communities to create and support more great places to live, work, and play," said Lynn Stoddard, Director of the Institute for Sustainable Energy. "We are looking forward to working with the Town as they pursue Sustainable CT certification."

Volunteers of all ages are needed for working groups, planning and coordination. Interested residents and organizations should contact Amber Wakley at (860) 851-8102 or amberw@staffordct.org.

For more information on Sustainable CT see the program's website: www.sustainablect.org.