

Climate Smart Communities Certification Program



Certification Manual

INNOVATION BONUS

Local governments are encouraged to innovate in the climate protection process, and can earn additional bonus points by implementing innovative projects, programs, or policies. This is achieved through implementing advanced actions not included in the rating system or using an innovative approach to implementing an action in the rating system.

Action #	Action Name	Action Pathway Phase	Possible Points	Priority
Innovation Bonus			15	
11.1	Implement a new innovative action	Implement	10	
11.2	Implement an action using an innovative approach	Implement	5	

Please note: The recertification requirements for each action is subject to change with future versions of the CSC Certification Manual.

Note: Local governments may submit information for more than one project to earn Innovation bonus points for Action 11.1 and 11.2, as long as each project is unique and unrelated.

11.1 IMPLEMENT A NEW INNOVATIVE ACTION

Action pathway phase: Implement

Eligibility timeline: Within 10 years prior to the application date

Total possible points: 10

A. Why is this action important?

Climate mitigation and adaptation are evolving fields with new technologies, policy solutions, and programmatic solutions being developed around the country and around the world. Local governments are encouraged to seek opportunities to implement innovative actions outside the list of actions in this rating system, and to maximize their opportunities for reducing GHG emissions and enhancing local resiliency. Implementing innovative actions is not only beneficial for the immediate community, but for local governments across the state, who are encouraged to share best practices and learn from each other.

B. How to implement this action

The implementation approach for the action depends on the type of action. The guidance provided in the manual for implementing other similar types of actions could be a useful starting point for guidance on implementing the selected action.

C. Time frame, project costs, and resource needs

The time frame, costs, and resource needs depend on the type of action. However, an innovative action does not necessarily must have a high level of effort to implement. Many innovative solutions involve partnerships or other forms of collaboration that seek to minimize the costs and level of effort for a community to implement.

D. Which local governments implement this action? Which departments within the local government are most likely to have responsibility for this?

This action is applicable to all types of local governments. The department with responsibility for the action depends on the type of action.

E. How to obtain points for this action

Points are earned for this action by demonstrating that this is a new and innovative action that has climate mitigation or adaptation benefits or helps to build a green economy, and is not included in the list of actions in the ten pledge elements. Local governments should specify the type of action using the action types outlined in the Introduction, (e.g. education and outreach, plan, facilities and infrastructure etc.) Points will be awarded based on the number of Climate Smart Communities program goals on which the action has a direct impact.

	<u>Possible Points</u>
• Reduces GHG emissions	3
• Enhances local resilience	3
• Helps build a green economy	3
• Provides additional co-benefits	1

Local governments may submit information for more than one project for this action, as long as each project is unique and unrelated. There is no limit to the number of projects a local government could submit for this action, as long as the community can demonstrate a unique innovation for each unrelated project.

F. What to submit

Local governments should submit documentation demonstrating that the action has been completed or implemented, and an explanation of how this action is new and innovative. The action must have been implemented within ten years prior to the application date to be eligible for points.

G. Links to Additional Resources or Best Practices

Best practice resources can be found throughout the Certification Manual, which may inspire new innovative solutions.

H. Recertification requirements

The recertification requirements are the same as the initial certification requirements.

11.2 IMPLEMENT AN ACTION USING AN INNOVATIVE APPROACH

Action pathway phase: Implement

Eligibility timeline: Within 10 years prior to the application date

Total possible points: 5

A. Why is this action important?

Local governments can innovate in many ways. One way to innovate is use creative approaches to implement proven strategies. An innovative approach could be a new financing strategy, partnership, policy mechanism or other new means of implementing one of the actions listed in the rating system. This action encourages local governments to tailor and implement solutions to their local needs and resources.

B. How to implement this action

The intent of this action is to encourage use of novel approaches to implementing one of the actions in the rating system. The implementation approach for the action depends on the type of action. The guidance provided in the manual for implementing other similar types of actions could be a useful starting point for guidance on implementing the selected action. However, since the focus of this action is using an innovative approach, local governments may seek to deviate from the provided guidance and alter their implementation approach.

C. Time frame, project costs, and resource needs

The time frame, costs, and resource needs depend on the type of action. However, an innovative action or approach does not necessarily need to have a high level of effort to implement. Many innovative solutions involve partnerships or other forms of collaboration that seek to minimize the costs and level of effort for a community to implement.

D. Which local governments implement this action? Which departments within the local government are most likely to have responsibility for this?

This action is applicable to all types of local governments. The department with responsibility for the action depends on the type of action.

E. How to obtain points for this action

Points are earned for this action by demonstrating how the community used an innovative approach to implement an action listed in the rating system. Local governments should specify the action name and number for which they are requesting innovative approach points. The points for this action are considered bonus points to be earned on top of the points the local government can earn for the action itself. Points will be awarded based on the type of action and the degree of innovation in the approach.

Local governments may submit information for several projects for this action, as long as each project is unique and unrelated. There is no limit to the number of projects a local government could submit for this action, as long as the community can demonstrate a unique innovation for each unrelated project.

F. What to submit

Local governments should submit documentation demonstrating that the action has been completed or implemented, and an explanation of how the approach to implementing this action is innovative. The action must have been implemented within ten years of the application date to be eligible for points.

G. Links to Additional Resources or Best Practices

Best practice resources can be found throughout the Certification Manual, which may inspire new innovative solutions and approaches.

H. Recertification requirements

The recertification requirements are the same as the initial certification requirements.