

NEMSN Profile: Groton, CT

Community Profile¹

<i>Area (sq. Miles):</i>	31
<i>Population:</i>	40,136
<i>Population Density:</i>	1,293.00
<i>Households:</i>	16,283
<i>Median Age:</i>	32
<i>Median Household Income:</i>	\$60,157
<i>Poverty Rate:</i>	8.60%

City Department:

Title: Office of Planning & Development Services

Staff: Jonathan J. Reiner: Director of Planning, Rick Norris: Sustainability Program Project Manager.

Responsibilities: Encourage the orderly use of land and the conservation of energy and resources, the economic and environmental well-being of the community and to ensure the safe occupation of buildings, structures and uses.

Programs/Policies: Overlook community based projects/programs that pertain to energy and sustainability.

Interview:

What have been your biggest successes in the past 2-3 years?

- Conversion of LED lights (1,500) with Eversource Grant program(\$5,000 4-year period). (There are some issues because there are two separate light companies in Groton.
- Starting to convert municipal facilities to gas, install gas in neighborhoods instead of oil.
- Just finished portion of the Coastal Management Plan. (UCONN, ICLEI & Sam Merrill).
- Natural gas expansion throughout our neighborhoods. Have modified high school to use natural gas (will save \$50k per year with first cost of \$50k).
- School efficiency project- implementing micro-girds.

Given the range of your priorities, which do you consider to be your top priorities?

- Energy conservation- solar on landfill, building retrofits.
- Implement bike share program.

- Look more into composting programs.
- Update 2013 energy strategy.
- Complete building benchmarking.
- Need to update Energy Portfolio.

Please explain why you have chosen these priorities?

These priorities are the most viable for GHG reduction. They will help in creating emission targets.

How important are the metrics in identifying the progress of the programs and policies?

- Have Energy system data on excel spreadsheet- began to use EPA benchmarking.
- Do not have the ability to read and measure energy usage efficiently.
- Can't see real time data. Would like to be able to see real time data.
- Would like to take analyze and graph monthly data to project energy usage changes.

What resources are needed to complete your strategies and priorities? Are they currently available to you? If not, do you know where/how to obtain them?

- Finances.
- Manpower to analyze data.
- Grant writer- someone who can also search for funding through grants.
- Update application for neighborhood system act grants.
- Solar panels became more difficult, once the SREC program and net-metering program went away.

How has the local community promoted its sustainability efforts to members in the community?

- People are interested in progress but the town has little time and ability to properly project data that identifies progress.
- The town is getting some solar promotion from utilities.
- Bike share has some promotion.

What are your top 3 barriers that you consider to be beyond the control of the municipality, which have limited your ability to implement sustainability initiatives?

- Significant cuts in town budget. (\$200,000 is next cut). Groton city council is more focused on cutting taxes rather than community improvements.

- Need outside sources to front money for programs because there is no money within the community.
- Need more people to focus on searching for funding.
- State barriers, we wanted to put solar array on landfill but the state said no.
- Suggested that USDN help communities with planning and project eval. (ex. Microgrids). Then communities can look for funding.

Sustainable Plans

	Targets/Goals	Published Plan	Metrics/Reporting
Solid Waste Reduction & Recycling			
Food & Agriculture			
Transportation			
Storm Water		✓	✓
Energy	✓	✓	✓
Development		✓	
GHG Reduction	✓	✓	✓
Climate Preparedness		✓	
Equity & Economics			
Community Engagement			
Totals	2	5	3

Data Source: University of New Hampshire Sustainability Institute: Program Implementation Survey 2017

Initiative Implementation

Groton, CT	Not Yet Considered	Planning	In Progress	Fully Implemented
Curbside Composting	✓			
Zero Waste Policy	✓			
Community Gardens				✓
Urban Agriculture & Local Food Programs		✓		
Complete Streets		✓		
Bike Share/ Rail Trail				
Green Storm Water Infrastructure Upgrades		✓		
Commercial/Municipal Building Upgrades			✓	✓
Municipal Energy Aggregation	✓			
Municipal Solar Installations		✓		
Community Solar Installations		✓		
LED Conversions: Streetlight				✓
LED Conversion: Municipal Buildings			✓	✓
Mixed-Use Development		✓		
Urban Infill		✓		
Sustainable Housing for Low-Income Families		✓		
Aiding Local Business With Sustainable Programs		✓		
Updated Website with Events/Reports		✓		
High Performance School Construction Project		✓		
Totals	3	11	2	4

Data Source: University of New Hampshire Sustainability Institute: Program Implementation Survey 2017

Sources:

- 1.) "Census Profile: Groton, CT." *Census Reporter*. N.p., n.d. Web 20 June 2017.