

# Sustainability Performance Plan

## FY 2021

### CT Innovations

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*This report was written in compliance with  
section 5 of Executive Order 1.*



# EO 1 Background

On April 24, 2019, Governor Lamont launched the GreenerGov CT initiative by signing Executive Order 1 (EO 1) which directs Executive Branch agencies to advance environmental leadership and cost savings for taxpayers by reducing greenhouse gas emissions and other sustainability objectives in energy use in buildings and vehicles, water use, and waste disposal.

EO 1 calls on agencies to recommit to and expand the state's Lead by Example (LBE) program to reduce the operating costs and environmental impacts of state government facilities and operations. EO 1 builds on the foundation of the state's LBE program by setting new sustainability goals, listed below, for Executive Branch agencies and invoking deeper levels of commitment and participation.

## **GHG**

45% reduction in  
GHG emissions  
below 2001 levels

## **WATER**

10% reduction in  
water consumption  
from a FY20 baseline

## **WASTE**

25% reduction in  
waste disposal from a  
FY20 baseline

Since the GreenerGov CT initiative was launched, significant progress has been made towards laying the groundwork for expanded LBE initiatives in the future: governance structures were established, baseline data was collected, and financing and project strategies were developed. Additionally, agencies reported completing or making progress on 90+ sustainability projects in FY20 in the annual agency Sustainability Performance Plans. Sustainability Performance Plans are plans drafted each year by Senior Sustainability Officers to detail agency progress and necessary goals, actions, and responsible parties to achieve the targets set in EO 1.

In 2020 and 2021, agencies continued to navigate the COVID-19 pandemic. As many agencies returned to the office in 2021, the GreenerGov CT leadership encouraged agencies to use the return to the office from teleworking as an opportunity to refresh staff practices and to take on new sustainability initiatives. The FY21 Sustainability Performance Plan includes a summary of sustainability actions initiated as part of the "Returning to the Office Greener" call to action.

# EO 1 Participation Overview

## CT Innovations' Mission

Connecticut Innovations (CI) is the leading source of financing and ongoing support for Connecticut's innovative, growing companies. To maximize growth potential, CI provides venture capital and strategic support for early-stage technology companies, financial support for innovation and collaboration, and connections to its well-established network of partners and professionals. For more information, visit [www.ctinnovations.com](http://www.ctinnovations.com).

## FY21 Participation Overview

Connecticut Innovations (CI) is a quasi agency/entity voluntarily participating in the GreenerGov efforts initiated by Executive Order 1 (EO1). CI's core operations are split into two innovation hubs in Hartford and New Haven. Cynthia Petruzzello is participating in the GreenerGov Committee Steering Meetings at DEEP and has been joined by Sara Donofrio to further strengthen CI's presence. Cynthia and Sara are also members of the Sustainability in Leased Space Project Team.

## Participating Agency Staff

Cynthia Petruzzello  
Sara Donofrio



## Sustainability Projects

including projects relating to infrastructure improvements or behavioral change that took place in owned, leased, or occupied space and were either in progress or completed in FY21

# Sustainability Projects

## Project 1

**What:** While CI does not have a designated fleet of electric vehicles, we have been actively investigating the installation of electric vehicle charging stations (EVCS) to be located at the District, which is our New Haven County base office. We have had discussions with the building owners and the on-site property management team with respect to placement of the EVCS, number of stations, and access. Everyone has been extremely amenable to our sustainability efforts, and we are currently working on the logistics. Ideally there would be access for staff and visitors to the District.

**Where:** 470 James Street, Suite 8, New Haven (The "District")

**Project type:** Structural - GHG - Vehicle/fleet

**Status:** In progress in FY 2021

**Benefits:** EVCS are proven to increase property value and improve goodwill between any building and its tenants/visitors. They also have been shown to encourage the shift from fossil-fueled cars to electric cars. Drivers need to feel confident that they'll find public charging stations wherever they go. Moving forward, CI is very interested in looking into an automated sign-in program to cut down on any delays and scheduling for EVCS use. This would provide an enormous benefit to existing energy-conscious customers. By offering access to EVCS, CI will continue to show itself as an innovator in all areas of sustainability. With growing concerns over climate change and living more sustainable lives, electric cars are gaining momentum in terms of car sales and demand for infrastructure.

**Savings:** The electric vehicle industry has been growing steadily for several years now. Driving an EV means fewer visits to the mechanic and, therefore, lower maintenance costs. Charging electronic vehicles is significantly cheaper than filling up the tank of a gasoline-powered car. In addition, awareness of the damage that gas-fueled vehicles cause to the environment is growing, making it another reason why people are looking forward to making the switch to EVs. CI wants to improve ease of use for its customers and staff. We are not able to quantify this cost savings in dollars at this time.

## Project 2

**What:** Organic Diversion/Collection Program. While this program has been stalled, CI would like to get it up and running again. We have made coffee grounds available for staff to take home for their gardening needs. It has been a slow process, but our staff is beginning to catch on to this concept. The main concern, since we are in very open quarters in our New Haven and Hartford offices, is the odors that may be emitted. In both of our offices, the kitchen is a major meeting area and is set up to encourage greater business collaboration and social interaction. We are currently investigating smaller units for organic diversion that can be inconspicuous to our visitors.

**Where:** 470 James Street, Suite 8, New Haven (The "District")

**Project type:** Behavioral - Combination

**Status:** In progress in FY 2021

**Benefits:** The benefits of this project can be enormous. Food scraps are very rich for composting. On days when there are a significant number of people in the office, our garbage containers are filled to the top. Our goal is to divert this waste from the garbage container to a separate, self-contained unit. The Green Team is investigating the purchase of receptacles with advice from DEEP. CI strongly believes that it is very important to educate our staff how this program can work for them in the office and carry it over into their everyday living.

**Savings:** Organic diversion or composting minimizes the food waste sent to landfills, thereby reducing methane generation and avoiding significant costs incurred by developing or expanding landfills. Methane emissions from organic waste such as food and plant waste are largely preventable. The actions to reduce these emissions—preventing waste at the source, diverting waste from landfills, and establishing separate collection, treatment, and energy recovery—create additional social and economic opportunities. By reducing the amount of food wasted within cities, governments can address landfill challenges, fight food insecurity and mitigate climate change. Compost is different from garden soil—it's much richer! Most big-box garden stores do not sell 100% compost. You may have to go to a specialty garden store to get pure compost. Your flowers, plants and garden fruits and vegetables will be hearty and healthy, and your family, friends and neighbors will thank you in ways that money cannot match!

# Sustainability Projects cont.

## Project 3

**What:** At CI, we believe tuning up our recycling practices is a continual process. It is important to reinforce that we are an office that recycles. This can be accomplished through visual signage and recycling symbols. We have already seen a noticeable increase in the number of ceramic cups (that can go into the dishwasher) that are used each day, which translates to a decline in the use of disposable cups. The same can be said for the use of our utensils that are provided in the kitchen. There is great wisdom in making the disposable items less available. We also strongly encourage the use of refillable water bottles instead of single-use plastic bottles. We recently purchased a very inexpensive water filtration machine that sits near the sink on the counter. The previous water filtration system required the user to open the refrigerator for access.

**Where:** 470 James Street, Suite 8, New Haven (The "District"); 120 Huyslope Avenue, Suite 403, Hartford (The Colt Armory)

**Project type:** Structural - Combination

**Status:** In progress in FY 2021

**Benefits:** There is very little to no cost for fine tuning our recycling practices in the office. The only "monetary cost" would be to purchase stickers with the recycling logo, and our marketing department is extremely adept at creating in-house markings. Time is a valuable resource, and that is why the Green Team believes that education is the answer.

**Savings:** The demonstrated savings is difficult to quantify in units and measures while we are still on a hybrid basis at work. As we move toward the end of the Covid pandemic, we will be in a better position to assess savings. The "savings" is in the knowledge that we are creating a sustainable work environment.

# Return to the Office Greener

In FY21, the GreenerGov CT leadership encouraged agencies to use the return to the office from teleworking due to the COVID-19 pandemic as an opportunity to refresh staff practices and habits and to take on new sustainability initiatives. Eleven actions were presented as possible strategies for a more sustainable return to the office, and agencies were asked to pick three actions not already in process. The actions for CT Innovations are highlighted below.

## Returning to the Office Greener Suggested Actions

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| 1. Identify agency vehicles which could be transitioned to electric models.   | ✓ |
| 2. Have a No-Cost retro commissioning scoping study to identify HVAC improvement and controls opportunities.          |   |
| 3. Sign up a building to participate in Eversource's Strategic Energy Management program.                             |   |
| 4. Have a free building energy audit performed to identify basic opportunities to upgrade lighting or weatherization. |   |
| 5. Perform a water audit to identify opportunities for fixture replacement or conservation actions.                   |   |
| 6. Check for water leaks using the Fix-A-Leak Checklist.  |   |
| 7. Assess the feasibility of hosting solar on your buildings or property.   |   |
| 8. Optimize your dumpster size and pickup schedule.   |   |
| 9. Start an organics diversion/collection program.  | ✓ |
| 10. Tune up recycling practices.  | ✓ |
| 11. Make a Green Team of staff invested in making space and operations more sustainable.                              |   |
| 12. Other actions: Establish charging stations for electric vehicles.   | ✓ |

## Additional details on the return to the office:

CI has initiated the recycling of coffee grounds throughout the organization. This reduces waste and also implements a more sustainable environment. In addition, we have reduced the usage of paper products within the organization. Dishes are being washed via a dishwasher to help lower the amount of water being used. The head of our IT department has pointed out to the Green Team that we should be recycling batteries for our electronics. We are now in contact with the recycling company as directed by DEEP.

# COVID-19 Impact

## Impact of COVID-19 on CT Innovations' ability to make progress on the goals of EO 1 in FY21

The pandemic has bolstered the progress of our goals for EO-1, mainly because we have been in the office on a hybrid basis. There is less waste because there are fewer people impacting day-to-day operations. Prior to the pandemic, we began to minimize office supply purchases and created a supply closet of not only new items but also recycled items (file folders, paper clips, name badges, etc.). One of our 2020 goals was to have more plants in the office, but progress toward this goal was stalled due to the pandemic. The Green Team would like to restart this initiative and perhaps choose plants that do not need a great deal of care.

## COVID-19 changes that have led to a positive sustainability outcome that will continue after the pandemic

Strategically evaluating building footprint needed for agency work	
Reassessing agency fleet	
Holding virtual meetings as a more regular practice	✓
Increased telework as a regular practice	✓
No changes to report	
Other	

## Additional details on positive sustainability outcomes and how they will be continued after the pandemic

The entire staff of CI have been working with companies to provide seamless transactions throughout the pandemic. We have digital displays in our entryway as well as in the kitchen area that alert staff and visitors to the positive effects of recycling and being green. Digital updates reduce the amount of printed paper. Closings are now stored electronically, requiring much less paperwork and storage space. We have put many of our forms on the website rather than mailing them out, and we can receive most of them back electronically. Just before the pandemic came upon us in 2020, we were looking into Earth Day projects that the office could do to increase camaraderie. The District in New Haven is very active in clean-up projects in the local neighborhood, and we plan to get involved in those moving forward. We are also looking into taking our bottles and cans to recycling centers and using that money to promote recycling for the offices in both Hartford and New Haven. The Green Team has worked to open a line of direct communication with staff.

# Future Planning

## Status of FY20 Plans

	Progress has been made	Progress has stalled	Plans have been completed.	Stated plans no longer a priority	Other
GHG Reduction	✓				
Water Use Reduction			✓		
Waste Reduction	✓				

## Sustainability Plans Beyond FY21

### GHG Reduction

As listed in our Sustainability Goal #1 for 2022, CI is looking forward to having an EVCS located at the New Haven office. We also continue to encourage our staff to carpool when feasible and use public transportation to get to and from work. It also appears that our office often serves as a meeting hub for other state agencies, which has drastically reduced travel times and distances all on ends.

### Water Use Reduction

We plan to continue to monitor any leak situations and encourage everyone to be proactive. We tell our staff that if they see something, they should say something! Encouraging our staff to take part in "Fix A Leak Week" was a fun activity.

### Waste Reduction

CI is continually reminded to work toward our goal of a "paperless" office. We plan to reduce purchases of paper products by going to a more virtual digital environment—for example, by using QR codes to use technologies in our conference rooms instead of printed pieces of paper. Our Accounting department is encouraging electronic transmission of all our incoming and outgoing payments.



# Resources Needed

## Barriers encountered while making EO 1 progress in FY21

Funding	
Staffing	
Technical expertise	
No barriers encountered	
Other: No face-to-face interactions	✓

## Additional details on barriers encountered

There is no replacement for meetings in person. Our videoconference meetings (via Microsoft Teams, Zoom, etc.) have been extremely effective in performing our core work. Everyone looks forward to returning to face-to-face interactions when it is safe.

## Specific type of support or resources needed to make progress on future sustainability projects

DEEP's technical expertise has proved invaluable to CI. We would like to see this continue in the future. Our questions are always addressed in a very timely matter. As we will be continuing to work in a hybrid office environment, short educational videos that we can share with our staff would be helpful, particularly as they can be watched independently.

## Additional info on CT Innovations' participation in EO 1 during FY21

CI takes a strong stance in supporting EO-1. The environment is one of the pillars of CI's ESG mission. As Connecticut's strategic venture capital arm (and the leading source of financing and ongoing support for innovative growing companies in the state), CI is dedicated to innovation in the business environment. With that comes the responsibility to make this world more sustainable and innovative, for now and the future.