



STAR Community Index

# Sustainability Goals & Guiding Principles

The groundbreaking release of 81 goals and 10 guiding principles that collectively define community-scale sustainability and form the foundation of STAR—a national rating system that will offer local governments a roadmap for creating healthy, inclusive, and prosperous communities.

October 2010

·I·C·L·E·I  
Local  
Governments  
for Sustainability



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# Introduction

The release of the STAR Community Index™ Sustainability Goals and Guiding Principles represents a milestone in the national movement to create more livable, sustainable communities for all. These 81 sustainability goals and 10 guiding principles collectively define community-scale sustainability, and present a vision of how communities can become more healthy, inclusive, and prosperous across eight specific categories. The Goals provide a much needed vocabulary that local governments and their communities can use to more effectively strategize and define their sustainability planning efforts.

The Goals and Guiding Principles also form the foundation of the forthcoming STAR Community Index, a national framework and performance-management system that will finally allow local governments to measure and rate their sustainability performance.

## Why Communities Need Defined Goals—and STAR

For too long, community sustainability has been a nebulous concept with competing definitions and frameworks. There has never been a national standard by which to measure sustainability performance (e.g., economic prosperity, health and safety, climate protection, etc.) at the municipal or county scale. Establishing these Goals and Guiding Principles is the first giant step toward addressing this critical need, and giving local governments the tools to accelerate their efforts and achieve greater success. This milestone is the product of thousands of volunteer hours, and the engagement of more than 160 sustainability experts and stakeholders from broad disciplines using a collaborative and consensus-based process, drawn from government, the nonprofit and private sectors, and academia.

## How to Use the Goals

The STAR Sustainability Goals and Guiding Principles are an invaluable resource for local governments and community stakeholders working to create or revise a sustainability plan, and can help focus ongoing sustainability initiatives. Using the Sustainability Goals as a framework in combination with ICLEI's **Five Milestones for Sustainability**, they can more readily conduct a sustainability assessment and establish sustainability goals to integrate into their plan. ICLEI is developing a guidance document to assist these efforts. In the meantime, by aligning local priorities with STAR's framework now, communities will be primed to utilize the full STAR performance management system when it is released in early 2012.

# I. STAR Background and Development

## Mission

The mission of ICLEI USA is to build, serve, and drive a movement of local governments to advance deep reductions in greenhouse gas emissions, execute clean energy solutions, and achieve tangible improvements in local sustainability.

## About ICLEI-Local Governments for Sustainability USA Inc.

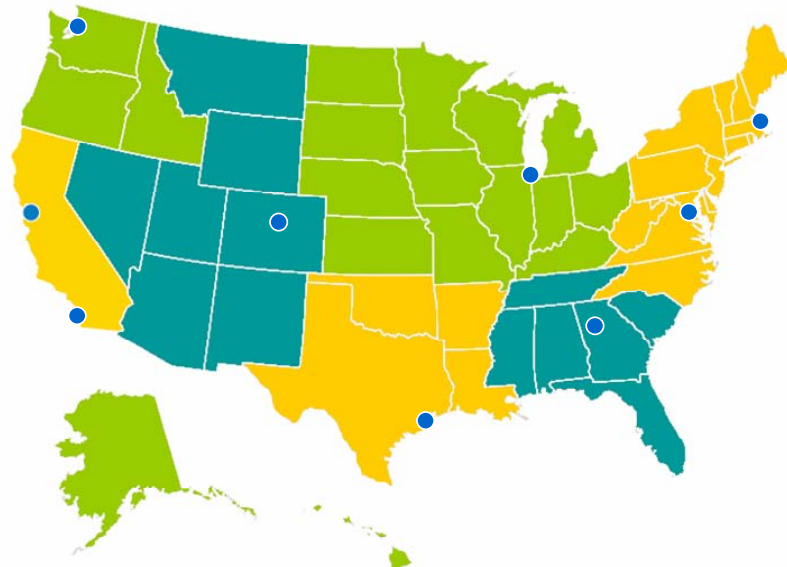
ICLEI USA is a membership association of local governments committed to advancing climate protection and sustainable development. For 20 years, ICLEI has pioneered the agenda, practices, and technical tools for local climate action and urban sustainability, both in the United States and worldwide. ICLEI's membership in the United States is more than 600 strong representing nearly 30 percent of the U.S. population, up 25 percent from 2008. Local governments continue to join ICLEI because they realize the value of membership and the imperative of their climate and sustainability efforts. Internationally, ICLEI Global serves as the focal point for local governments and was the second largest NGO at the 2009 United Nations Climate Change Conference in Copenhagen, Denmark. ICLEI has consistently been at the forefront of enabling local governments to institute sustainable practices—from its work on climate in the 1990s to the current commitment to the STAR system. The time is now to fundamentally change the way that local governments and the communities they represent manage energy, reduce greenhouse gas emissions and advance sustainability.

At ICLEI USA, we have found that educational and policy programs are not enough. Networks and best practices are not enough. Software tools and consulting are not enough. Transformation requires a carefully coordinated, linked up system of political education, professional training and networking, technical support and civic education, and constant performance evaluation and feedback with each local government member over an extended time period. ICLEI has always focused on building that 'system.' STAR is designed to leverage each element of the system, and through our network of regional offices we are scaling up capacity to deliver and, together with our members, institute change as a matter of public interest.

## Regional Offices

- California, Oakland & Los Angeles
- Midwest, Chicago
- Northeast & Mid-Atlantic, Boston & New York
- Northwest & Islands, Seattle
- South Central, Houston
- Southeast, Atlanta
- West, Denver (2010)

## Scaling up Capacity through ICLEI USA's Network



## About the STAR Community Index

The STAR Community Index™ (STAR) is a pioneering strategic planning and performance management system that will offer local governments a roadmap for creating healthy, inclusive and prosperous communities. STAR takes an integrated approach, addressing the three intertwining facets of sustainability—economy, environment and society. STAR will meet the immediate need to provide a standard framework of sustainability goals and validation measures—from recycling rates and reduce greenhouse gas emissions to education quality and public safety. With clear, consistent, and easily accessible performance measures, cities, towns and counties will be able to more easily track their performance over time.

STAR's ambitious vision is primed for success thanks to the unprecedented collaboration involved in its creation. ICLEI USA is developing STAR with a number of key partners including the U.S. Green Building Council, the Center for American Progress, and the National League of Cities. In addition, ICLEI USA has enlisted 160 volunteers representing 130 organizations, including 60 cities and 10 counties, state and federal agencies, non-profit organizations, national associations, universities, utilities, and private corporations. These volunteers bring a diversity of perspectives and expertise and provide a formidable brain trust for informing both the structure and content of the program. This level of local government engagement has built a constituency of early adopters that will help provide fertile ground on which STAR can grow once established.

Sustainability issues are organized into the broad categories of environment, economy and society and across eight specific disciplines. A holistic approach has resulted in an integrated set of sustainability goals that are both individually relevant and collectively representative of a community's overall sustainability performance.

This document provides an overview of the process and program structure, and makes public the Guiding Principles and 81 Sustainability Goals developed by committees and approved by the Steering Committee. Together, these elements comprise the framework on which performance measures will be developed. We invite you to explore the list of Sustainability Goals to experience the breadth and integration represented by the STAR system. For more background and context on STAR, visit [www.icleiusa.org/star](http://www.icleiusa.org/star).

## A National Framework to Drive Concerted Action

Across the U.S., there is a pressing need for a national standard to guide local sustainability initiatives. A 2009 Living Cities survey found that four in five of the 40 largest U.S. cities consider sustainability among their top five priorities. Approximately one-half are either currently creating sustainability plans or have finished one within the past year, and another one-quarter have plans completed.

ICLEI USA's research indicates that these sustainability planning efforts are highly variable. Sustainability plans often adopt different measures of success and divergent approaches to integrate social, environmental and economic factors. The lack of consistency makes it difficult to compare progress across jurisdictions, identify collaborative opportunities, and share lessons learned. These differences

"Built by and for local governments, STAR is already establishing a constituency of early adopters."

are further magnified by the fact that there are no standard definitions for commonly used sustainability terms.

A national framework with a robust supporting structure such as an online commons, establish a common language and facilitate the dissemination of knowledge. STAR will allow Buffalo, for example, to learn and measure itself *vis-à-vis* Portland's experience. Common definitions, coupled with a standard process by which to measure and verify performance, will provide greater certainty.

This new level of standardization and integrity in a rating system will give local governments more confidence in their investment decisions. And more taxpayer dollars can go directly to the assessment and implementation of programs—instead of designing a sustainability effort from the bottom up. In turn, as local governments learn from each other and implement innovative policies and practices they will benefit from improved performance in greenhouse gas emission reductions, environmental protection, new jobs, more robust local commerce, and healthier communities.

## Governance and Development Process

For every successful standard, framework, or certification, there are scores of examples that have simply not achieved significant market penetration. Reasons for this are many, but the level of stakeholder involvement in a framework's development appears to have lasting impacts on the public perception of the framework's objectiveness and, ultimately, its uptake in the marketplace. In much the same way LEED™ is transforming the building industry, STAR uses a consensus-based approach to establish a comprehensive system for cities, towns and counties.

Governance is also an important factor contributing to credibility, with a clear decision-making process the most important factor. In fact, ISEAL, International Social and Environmental Accreditation and Labeling, conducted a survey to identify the key factors that contribute to the credibility of social and environmental standards. The most important factors related to the process of development include:

- Fair representation from key interest groups in the development process.
- Independent, third-party verification of performance.
- Clear description of the development process and decision-making process.
- Clear social and environmental objectives.
- Demanding “minimum level of performance.”

The STAR governance structure features three primary decision-making entities: ICLEI USA Board of Directors, STAR Steering Committee, and STAR Technical Advisory Committees. However, prior to completing the STAR Community Index all major stakeholders will have an opportunity to provide comments.

In keeping with the objectives and character of the STAR Community Index, the decision-making process used by committees is collaborative and democratic. This approach helps ensure that the outcomes of the effort are widely supported and represent a broad range of interests, ideas and knowledge.

The ICLEI USA [Board of Directors](#) is a body of local leaders from across the country, including mayors and county executives representing each region, as well as global representatives. The Board of Directors will approve the STAR Pilot Version prior to its official release and launch of the STAR Pilot Program.

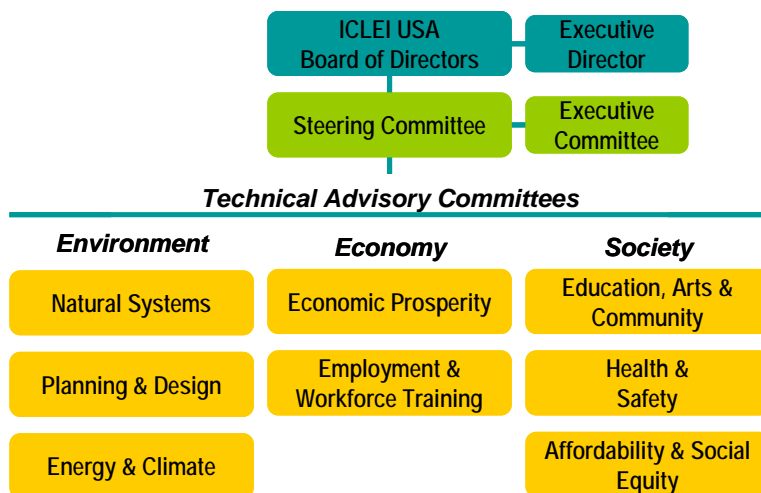
The Steering Committee serves as the governing body responsible for defining the system’s scope and structure, guiding development. It is comprised of 40 executives from a diverse group of cities and counties, federal agencies, national associations, and non-profit organizations. Two-thirds of the members are local governments, representing a diversity in size, region, and progress toward sustainability. The Steering Committee elected an Executive Committee to facilitate decision-making and act on its behalf between meetings. The Steering Committee approves the content—the goals and measures that comprise the STAR framework.

Eight Technical Advisory Committees are charged with developing the sustainability goals and validation measures that define community-scale sustainability and comprise the STAR framework. Nearly 120 volunteers serve on these committees and are drawn from a spectrum of expertise and organizations that represent local governments, state and federal agencies, universities, non-profit organizations, and private corporations. Through a collaborative and cross-disciplinary process, these committees recommend content for approval.

Volunteers were selected with the aim to create a balance among a variety of perspectives which is imperative to address the breadth of issues under the purview of each committee. Experts in areas as diverse as urban forestry to workforce development have collectively devoted many thousands of hours to identify the constituent elements of community scale sustainability and develop language describing the purpose (outcome) of each element.

For a list of current and past Executive Committee, Steering Committee and Technical Advisory Committee members, see *Acknowledgements* on page 21.

## Governance Structure



“high bar—  
low floor”

As a leadership program, set the bar high to challenge more advanced communities and encourage healthy competition. To encourage broader participation, set the barrier to entry low.

## Operating Assumptions

While STAR is a leadership system, a key objective is to be inclusive and provide value to a wide variety of users—from large cities to rural towns and from jurisdictions with advanced sustainability initiatives to those just beginning to develop their sustainability plan. Operating assumptions address key program objective and clarify to the overall design and structural considerations.

The operating assumptions also assist Technical Advisory Committees in developing validation measures for each Sustainability Goal. The operating assumptions are listed below and address the scope, structure, applicant, and performance validation process.

### Scope

- A validation measure may be applicable to either the local government itself or to the community at large, i.e. covering issues that jurisdictions are directly responsible for such as municipal operations and services, or extending to a broader set of issues that jurisdictions have influence over such as economic development, watershed protection and community health.
- The initial level of achievement in STAR may be possible through local government activities alone; however, achieving the highest levels in STAR will require collaboration with other stakeholders.
- STAR will evolve and improve over time.

### Structure

- STAR is a rating system. It is not intended to be a ranking system, but rather a tool for cities, towns and counties to evaluate their own progress against a series of standardized performance and best practice benchmarks.
- STAR is a menu-based system. The flexibility of a menu-based system will allow local governments to select the goals they feel are most important and relevant for their communities. (As a menu-based system, ratings will be awarded on a percentage of points achieved.)
- Some menu options are required as prerequisites within STAR categories.
- STAR will contain both relative and absolute validation measures.

### Applicant and Designation

- The lead applicant for STAR designation is a local government, or a city, town or county.
- Applicants will be required to re-certify over time to maintain their STAR designation.
- STAR will have a specific number of achievement levels, with a clear mechanism for determining an applicant’s achievement level.

### STAR Pilot Version

- The pilot version, planned for release in early 2012, will serve as an important opportunity to beta test the system, gather feedback and incorporate changes.
- The pilot version of STAR will feature validation measures—performance

metrics or outcome-based practices that can be independently verified as proxies of government or community-performance. Validation measures will strive to include performance metrics if possible. Practices measures may be identified if no quantifiable metrics exist for a goal area.

## Framework Terminology

The STAR framework and terminology is easily understood by policy makers. The structure features a set of components that reflect public sector mechanisms that are proven effective in advancing change. The terms are commonly used by local governments and communicate both the strategic objectives and desired outcomes. The structure also allows for incorporation of a variety of types of measures—from qualitative or quantitative to prescriptive or performance-based to relative or absolute metrics—to reflect the breadth of issues covered and leverage the leading research and professional practice for each goal area.

Term	Definition
Goal	Title of desired outcome that a jurisdiction intends to achieve.
Purpose	Statement to clarify relevance, provide context and communicate the desired outcome.
Validation Measure	Performance Measure: Verifiable indicator or metric, qualitative or quantitative, representing the actual state of a system and used to identify progress relative to Goal. OR,  Practice Measure: Actions, practices or systematic approach proven to be efficient and effective toward achieving Goal.

## Criteria for Validation Measures

On May 1, 2010 ICLEI USA began working with Technical Advisory Committees to create validation measures for each STAR Sustainability Goal. Criteria were built around a series of Operating Assumptions to normalize and streamline measures development. The committee developed criteria for selecting measures and developed guidance for utilizing the measures typologies (Performance and Practice) listed in the table above. The following criteria are adapted from “Indicators and Information Systems for Sustainable Development: A Report to the Balaton Group” by Donella Meadows, 1998.

- **Relevant:** Provide direct feedback on the outcomes of actions.
- **Feasible:** Leverage use of credible, commonly collected data for cost effective performance reporting that is flexible enough to be implemented in various local contexts.
- **Timely:** Capture actions and outcomes that are currently relevant, while looking forward to the future.
- **Useful:** Provide significant value to help cities and counties make decisions and address local priorities.

- **Systemic:** Draw attention to the preferred future, while offering a metric that measures true progress toward that achievement goal; and, where possible, will satisfy performance reporting for multiple goals to highlight the integrated nature of sustainability.
- **Reliable:** Provide a consistent reflection of achievement or performance across communities regardless of community characteristics, facilitating comparisons between communities.
- **Valid:** Represent the concepts and underlying phenomena that are embodied in the Goal area accurately.

## Get Started with STAR and The Five Milestones for Sustainability

To develop and implement a comprehensive sustainability plan, ICLEI USA guides its members through the Five Milestones for Sustainability, a performance-based methodology for improving community health, vitality and prosperity through intelligent, region appropriate strategies. The methodology underlying the Five Milestones provides a simple, standardized means to enable a community to effectively advance sustainability goals and report measurable achievements.

ICLEI USA has unparalleled experience engaging and guiding all forms of local governments, including counties, cities, towns, villages, and boroughs, on taking significant action to quantify and reduce their greenhouse gas emissions through its proven Five Milestone for Climate Protection. The Five Milestones represent a unique and powerful approach because each step builds on the last and local governments can learn and adjust as they go. At Milestone Two, 155 ICLEI USA members have set formal emissions reduction targets, committing to a projected reduction of more than 1,360,000,000 metric tons of CO<sub>2</sub>e by 2020.

### Five Milestones for Sustainability

Milestone Two emissions reductions projected by 2020:  
1.36 billion metric tons CO<sub>2</sub>e  
(= 25 million passenger vehicles for 10 years)



## Apply the STAR Sustainability Goals to Local Efforts

Local governments can begin today. Elected officials can demonstrate their leadership by making a commitment to establish a sustainability plan and communicating their support of actions that advance local sustainability goals. Trailblazers like New York City, Portland, and Minneapolis have shown that the end product of sustainability planning is worth the effort: a detailed blueprint to combat climate change, save energy and taxpayer dollars, strengthen economic prosperity, renew infrastructure, and improve public health and education for all.

The [Five Milestones for Sustainability](#) can be initiated in concert with the STAR Community Index Sustainability Goals to assist local governments in getting started on developing sustainability plans or refining existing plans. By following the steps below, cities, towns and counties can begin to apply these resources and showcase this ground-breaking system's ability to catalyze change. To get started:

- 1 Milestone One: Conduct a Sustainability Assessment.** To start the planning process, a local government can research and assess environmental, economic, and social equity challenges and opportunities within their jurisdiction—and the current programs in place to address these issues. During this process, the STAR Sustainability Goals can provide a standard framework to work from and in which to align local priorities. Resources are available in the Sustainability Planning Toolkit for conducting a quick-action assessment or a more comprehensive assessment.
- 2 Milestone Two: Establish Sustainability Goals.** In parallel to researching the challenges in Milestone One, a local government can begin to develop their own set of sustainability goals based on local priorities and conditions. Taken together, these goals can define a captivating vision for the future of the locality. Beginning in 2011, STAR will offer performance measures for each STAR goal area. By aligning local sustainability goals with the STAR framework, a local government will be positioned to become an early adopter of these performance targets. And early adopters can begin to share best practices and their lessons learned through ICLEI's network to drive concerted action.

## Next Steps

Measures for each STAR Goal area are being developed through 2011, using a process that balances focus on a particular Goal area with the need to recognize the interconnectedness and interdependencies between Goals. ICLEI USA will release measures in phases as they are completed to allow local governments to begin to integrate these measures in their sustainability plans and set realistic short and long-term performance targets for their communities.

In early 2012, the pilot version of the STAR Rating System will be released with an online tool that will allow STAR to be more fully utilized as a sustainability planning and performance management system. The tool will facilitate data gathering and performance evaluation, and help local governments institutionalize their efforts and report progress toward individual goals over time. In this way, ICLEI USA will be able to also recognize the achievements of participants, both those that achieve a rating and localities that demonstrate improvements over time.



ICLEI USA Member, Portland, OR, reduced local carbon emissions in 2008 to one percent below 1990 levels, despite rapid population growth. Over the same period, emissions in the U.S. as a whole increased 13 percent.

Weaving humankind  
Into hardscrabble places  
Towards renaissance

Haiku by Kalima Rose,  
PolicyLink and Technical  
Advisory Committee Member

## II. Guiding Principles and Sustainability Goals

The content of this document—representing the STAR structure, Guiding Principles, and comprehensive set of Sustainability Goals—is the culmination of unprecedented efforts and collaboration of dedicated volunteers, staff members and others. ICLEI USA invites the reader to join us in celebrating the efforts of so many through the release of these foundation elements of a larger system still under creation.

### Guiding Principles

The adjacent page shares the STAR Guiding Principles approved by the Steering Committee to ensure the performance measures embodied by STAR are holistic and representative of the three pillars of sustainability—environment, economy and equity. Guiding principles also make manifest the concepts and values that underpin STAR and local government-scale sustainability. These principles will provide guidance to the Technical Advisory Committees in the development of validation measures that will accompany each Goal area.

### Sustainability Goals

In the following pages, ICLEI USA also presents the 81 Sustainability Goals as of October 2010. Each goal is combined with a Purpose statement that express the desired outcome or aspiration of what localities will strive toward. The Sustainability Goals collectively represent a definition of community-scale sustainability. Individually, any one goal becomes an organizing mode for the performance and practice measures that make STAR into a rating system.

Changes to language, structural modifications, and the addition, change or deletion of specific elements are all likely as development continues. In fact, the Steering Committee approved the Sustainability Goals with comments, which were submitted to the Technical Advisory Committees for future consideration. The comments ranged from moving a goal to a different category to changing the language to better reflect what is and is not under the direct control of a local government.

The current focus of STAR development efforts is on creating measures associated with the goals listed within this document. These measures set performance levels and allow for evaluation and verification. It is assumed that measures development will further inform refining and evolution of the Sustainability Goals and Purpose Statements within this system.

We welcome comments, suggestions and questions about these sustainability goals and the STAR development process. Please email [starcommunity@iclei.org](mailto:starcommunity@iclei.org).

## Guiding Principles

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Think—and act—  
systemically.

Sustainable communities take a systems perspective and recognize that people, nature and the economy are all affected by their actions. Local governments in these communities consider the broader implications before embarking on specific projects, and they look for ways to accomplish multiple goals rather than default to short-term, piecemeal efforts.

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Instill resiliency.

Sustainable communities possess a strong capacity to respond to and bounce back from adversity. Local governments in these communities prepare for and help residents and institutions prepare for disruptions and respond to them swiftly, creatively and effectively.

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Foster innovation.

Sustainable communities capture opportunities and respond to challenges. Local governments in these communities cultivate a spirit of proactive problem solving to provide access to futures otherwise unobtainable and to enable the risk-taking inherent in innovation.

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Redefine progress.

Sustainable communities measure progress by improvements in the health and wellbeing of their people, environment and economy. Instead of focusing on GDP (throughput of dollars), local governments in these communities use a broad set of indicators.

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Live within means.

Sustainable communities steward natural resources so that future generations have as many opportunities available to them as we do today. They also recognize that resources exist for the benefit of life forms other than humans. Local governments in these communities assess resources, track impacts, and take corrective action when needed so that they meet the needs of today without depleting what they leave for future generations.

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Cultivate  
collaboration.

Sustainable communities engage all facets of society in working together for the benefit of the whole. Local governments in these communities bring government representatives, community members and organizations together and create a culture of collaboration that encourages innovation, sharing of resources, and jointly shared accountability for results.

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Ensure equity.

Sustainable communities allocate resources and opportunities fairly so that all people who do the full range of jobs that a community needs can thrive in it. Local governments in these communities actively eliminate barriers to full participation in community life and work to correct past injustices.

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Embrace diversity.

Sustainable communities feature a tapestry of peoples, cultures and economies underpinned by a richly functioning natural environment. Local governments in these communities celebrate and foster ethnic, cultural, economic and biological diversity and encourage multiple approaches to accomplish a goal.

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Inspire leadership.

Sustainable communities provide leadership through action and results. Local governments in these communities recognize their opportunity to effect change by backing visionary policies with practices that serve as an example for citizens and businesses to emulate.

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Continuously  
improve.

Sustainable communities engage in continuous discovery, rediscovery and invention as they learn more about the impacts of their actions. Local governments in these communities track both performance and outcomes, are alert for unintended consequences, and modify strategies based on observed results.

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# List of STAR Sustainability Goals

## ENVIRONMENT

### Natural Systems

Natural Resource Planning & Inventory
Green Infrastructure
Land Use in Watersheds
Water Quality & Supply
Agriculture & Aquaculture
Resource Lands
Biodiversity & Invasive Species
Ambient Noise & Light
Waste Minimization

### Planning & Design

Comprehensive Planning
Excellence in Design
Interconnected Land Use
Compact & Complete Communities
Design for People
Housing
Public Spaces
Transportation & Mobility
Land Conservation
Historic Preservation & Cultural Heritage
Code Barriers
Public Engagement & Participation

### Energy & Climate

Greenhouse Gas Mitigation
Climate Adaptation
Energy Supply
Energy Use
Resource Efficient Buildings
Alternative Fuels & Infrastructure
Industrial Sector Energy Use
Agricultural Climate Impacts

## ECONOMY

### Economic Prosperity

Enterprise Support
Industry Sector Development & Revitalization
Market Development
Community-Based Economic Development
Economic Localization
Land Redevelopment & Revitalization
Food System

### Employment & Workforce Training

Employment Opportunity
Employment Benefits
Labor Rights
Living Wages
Supportive Workplaces
Workplace Learning & Career Paths
Workforce Development Comprehensive Plan
Workforce Training
Resources for Success



City Hall Farmers Market, Seattle, WA

## SOCIETY

### Education, Arts & Community

Education Opportunities
Education Environments
School-Community Engagement
Ecological Literacy
Arts & Culture
Arts & Cultural Civic Support
Social & Cultural Diversity
Neighborhood Vitality
Civic Literacy + Engagement
Financial Literacy

### Health & Safety

Health System
Health & Safety Literacy
Workplace Health & Safety
Food Access & Nutrition
Drinking Water Quality
Outdoor Air Quality
Indoor Air Quality
Toxics Reduction
Natural & Human Hazards
Emergency Prevention & Response
Safe Communities
Active Living & Recreation

### Affordability & Social Equity

Government Transparency
Revenue Generation
Public Expenditures & Financial Investment
Infrastructure Investment
Social Cohesion
Human Services
Poverty Prevention & Alleviation
Civil & Human Rights
Cultural Practices
Environmental Justice
Equity Literacy
Adjudication & Restorative Justice
Community Empowerment
Equity Assessment & Planning

# Sustainability Goals with Purpose Statements

## NATURAL SYSTEMS

Sustainability Goal	Purpose Statement
Natural Resources Planning and Inventory	Protect, enhance and restore habitat and natural ecosystems to levels of function that confer resilience and adaptability and support biological imperatives for clean water and air, food, shelter and public safety.
Green Infrastructure	Design and maintain a strategically planned and managed green infrastructure network composed of natural lands, working landscapes and other open spaces that conserve ecosystem values and functions, and provide associated benefits to human populations. <i>Note: Purpose statement language developed by The Conservation Fund, permission needed.</i>
Land Use in Watersheds	Protect and restore the natural systems that underpin watershed health and hydrological integrity.
Water Quality and Supply	Design and maintain an integrated water, storm water, and waste water system that reduces pollution and protects and restores ecological systems, minimizes energy use and maximizes efficiency, and provides equitable distribution and pricing.
Agriculture and Aquaculture	Conserve and maintain land and other natural resources necessary for agriculture and aquaculture in ways that ensure accessibility, affordability, vitality and continued availability for use by current and future generations.
Resource Lands	Conserve and maintain lands that provide raw materials, renewable natural resources in such a way that allows for sustained harvest and maintains land vitality.
Biodiversity & Invasive Species	Preserve and restore regional biodiversity, with a focus on promoting native species and avoiding and eliminating invasive species.
Ambient Noise and Light	Minimize and manage ambient noise and light levels to protect the integrity of ecological systems and public health without compromising public safety and cultural expression.
Waste Minimization	Minimize waste and optimally recycle material resources to protect natural systems by reducing resource extraction, greenhouse gas emissions, and air and water pollution.

## PLANNING & DESIGN

Comprehensive Planning	Provide a long-range vision for the future growth and development of the community that addresses economic, environmental and social problems and opportunities within the community; ensure public and encourage private investments are supportive of that vision.
Excellence in Design	Encourage the siting and design of public and private projects to minimize environmental impact, maximize financial efficiency, optimize social equity and benefits, and improve public health.
Interconnected Land Use	Encourage diverse, accessible, and proximate land uses to promote active living and access to vital services including employment, education, and healthy food.
Compact and Complete Communities	Create compact communities with a range of services that allow for amenities and transportation options; afford equitable access to the ingredients of what makes for an economically and socially viable neighborhood; reduce the community's carbon footprint.
Design for People	Create human-scale built environments that provide comfort, safety, accessibility and are pleasing to all human inhabitants.
Housing	Foster the preservation, construction and maintenance of an adequate supply of healthful, affordable, resource-efficient, and inclusive housing. Residential development should be available to all ages, abilities, incomes, and household sizes and be located in environmentally safe areas near public transportation, jobs, and critical goods and services.
Public Space	Invest in, program and optimally maintain diverse and interconnected public spaces that feature equitable, convenient, and comfortable access, encourage safe and healthy behaviors, minimize hazards, are culturally appropriate and attract and serve all populations.
Transportation	Reduce vehicle miles traveled and associated greenhouse gas and criteria air pollutant emissions by enhancing the availability of, and access to, diverse transportation choices, including non-motorized modes and transit; create safe, affordable mobility and physical activity opportunities for all; and provide and optimally maintain infrastructure that efficiently and affordably moves people and goods locally and regionally.
Land Conservation	Shape the settlement pattern and protect critical community resources by acquiring, conserving, and managing important landscapes in perpetuity.
Historic Preservation and Cultural Heritage	Promote the preservation and reuse of historic resources, including buildings, structures, sites, neighborhood districts and cultural landscapes to assist in the retention of local, regional and national history and heritage, reinforcement of community character, and conservation of material resources.
Codes, Ordinances and Requirements	Ensure that planning guidelines, zoning codes, building codes, and health codes consider community and site context, improve ecological integrity, are based on life cycle costing, foster social equity, and reward innovation.
Public Engagement in Planning and Design	Provide regular, meaningful, and equitable opportunities for citizens to shape the future of their communities.

## ENERGY & CLIMATE

Greenhouse Gas Mitigation	Achieve greenhouse gas emissions and criteria air pollutant reductions in both municipal operations and the community at large, with attention given to reduction and prevention of inequalities.
Climate Adaptation	Improve the response and resiliency of all communities to climate change impacts on the built, natural and social environments with an emphasis on public health and historically underserved populations.
Energy Supply	Provide an affordable and secure energy supply that increases the development and use of renewable, least toxic and less carbon-intensive sources.
Energy Use	Provide affordable and secure energy for all while minimizing demand and consumption.
Resource Efficient Buildings	Enhance the energy performance and resource efficiency of a community's building stock throughout its lifecycle.
Alternative Fuels and Infrastructure	Support low-carbon and high resource-efficiency transportation options through the development of supporting infrastructure, fuel purchasing and local fuel production.
Industrial Sector Energy Use	Reduce energy use and greenhouse gas emissions in industrial sector operations and throughout the lifecycle of the products manufactured.
Agricultural Climate Impacts	Encourage the efficient use of resources and reduce greenhouse gas emissions from agricultural and farming processes.

## ECONOMIC PROSPERITY

Enterprise Support	Enhance traditional business retention, expansion and attraction activities to work with individual businesses of a range of sizes and types to increase overall economic vitality, environmental and human health, and social responsibility of business enterprises.
Industry Sector Development and Revitalization	Support the growth of new industry sectors, and the transition of existing industry sectors, toward practices, products and services that increase environmental performance, human health and social responsibility.
Market Development	Increase overall market demand in local and export markets for value added products and services that increase environmental performance, human health and social responsibility.
Neighborhood and Community-Based Economic Development	Spur community- and neighborhood-level economic development and redevelopment in ways that develop and manage the community's resources for its residents' benefit on a sustainable and inclusive basis.
Economic Localization	Strengthen and diversify local economies by developing localized networks for economic exchange and increase the total number and market share of locally owned, socio-culturally diverse and neighborhood- and community-based businesses.
Land Redevelopment and Revitalization	Reclaim and repurpose vacant, obsolete or contaminated land and buildings to improve community health and safety, increase environmental quality and provide economic benefits.
Food System	Strengthen local and regional food systems and support and encourage an economically viable, environmentally sound and socially equitable food system throughout the food production, use and disposal life cycle.

## EMPLOYMENT & WORKFORCE TRAINING

Employment Opportunity	Promote diversity and social equity in the workplace, maintain and vigorously enforce anti-discrimination and employment statutes, and provide recourse for those discriminated against in their pursuit or retention of employment.
Employment Benefits	Promote the adoption of affordable health, retirement and other benefits for all workers in all sectors, and provide such benefits to municipal employees.
Labor Rights	Protect all workers' right to organize and bargain collectively to implement progressive and fair labor policies.
Living Wages	Ensure that every worker earns a living wage—one that allows workers and their families to afford a decent standard of living, including housing, transportation, and other basic needs without depending on public subsidies.
Supportive Workplaces	Cultivate family-friendly workplaces including flexible scheduling, job sharing, easily accessible childcare, and maternity/paternity leave.
Workplace Learning and Career Paths	Enable career advancement and wage improvement of a community's employee base via professional development, mentoring and academic learning; provide on-the-job training to improve worker safety, productivity and job satisfaction.
Workforce Development Comprehensive Planning	Use industry and workforce data, coordinated with local economic education development strategies, to drive workforce investments, decision-making, goal- and priority-setting and progress measurement.
Workforce Training	Prepare participants for success in the marketplace and workplace by providing quality, affordable and accessible training that imparts the technical, personal, and team skills leading to demonstrable outcomes with respect to successful employment access and retention.
Resources for Success	Offer support services and tools to help ensure all residents, particularly those with barriers to employment, can successfully enter and complete training programs.

## EDUCATION, ARTS & COMMUNITY

Educational Opportunities	Engage all people, from birth through adulthood, with access to high quality public education.
Educational Environments	Design, manage and operate high-quality facilities and learning settings, accessible to all students and community members that appropriately serve their target community, create safe and lasting connections to the community at large, and expand assets for historically underserved communities.
School-Community Engagement	Drive successful education inside and outside the classroom by building a strong school-community learning partnership and mutual ownership of educational success.
Ecological Literacy	Provide residents with the informational and material resources they need to think critically about and address environmental problems and solutions, and include the environment as an important consideration in their work and daily living.
Arts and Culture	Engage all audiences with a diverse offering of arts and cultural opportunities and allow for regular participation and creative self-expression; use these resources as platforms to address social, environmental, educational and economic development issues in the community.
Arts and Cultural Civic Support	Establish civic leadership and support in cultivating a broad range of arts, cultural and heritage resources and activities.
Social and Cultural Diversity	Celebrate and respect diversity and sensitively utilize the diverse perspectives and traditions embodied in the social, cultural and economic diversity of a community's residents.
Neighborhood Vitality	Support the function and identity of neighborhoods by encouraging communication, strengthening community bonds, local participation and interaction, and enhancing sense of place.
Civic Literacy and Engagement	Encourage communication and promote meaningful participation in civic life within and among neighborhoods and the larger community; create civic participation that is accessible to all, with barriers to full participation eliminated.
Financial Literacy	Empower citizens to make informed choices about the risks and benefits of financial decisions by enhancing understanding of financial concepts and products.

## HEALTH & SAFETY

Health System	Establish and maintain a local health system that monitors and improves community health and provides equal access to affordable, quality health services.
Health and Safety Literacy	Provide programs and curricula that encourage health and safety, and provide opportunities to gain knowledge, skills, and values essential to leading physically and mentally healthy and safe lives.
Workplace Health and Safety	Implement workplace policies, procedures, and process and physical modifications that minimize workers' exposures to hazardous conditions, create a healthy working environment, and promote nutrition, physical activity, and stress management.
Food Access and Nutrition	Ensure community food security and equitable physical and economic access to safe, nutritious, and culturally appropriate food at all times for every resident across a community; provide opportunities for residents to grow their own food; educate residents about nutrition and food—from farm to plate.
Drinking Water Quality	Ensure access to safe, high quality, affordable drinking water for all communities.
Outdoor Air Quality	Ensure that outdoor air quality is healthy for all segments of the human population and for the natural environment.
Indoor Air Quality	Ensure that indoor air quality is healthy for all segments of the human population.
Toxics Reduction	Reduce toxic exposure and manage materials streams to minimize the use and production of toxic substances throughout product and material life cycles.
Natural and Human Hazards	Plan, deploy and maintain physical and social infrastructures such that vulnerability to natural and human hazards and disasters is reduced for all members of a community and ensure that communities are adequately prepared to respond to crises, response is effective and coordinated, and recovery is accelerated.
Emergency Prevention and Response	Utilize long term preventive and collaborative approaches to reduce and avoid emergency incidents; respond to emergency incidents with strategies that minimize response time and harm to humans, property and the environment.
Safe Communities	Create safe, peaceful and thriving communities where all government sectors actively collaborate with citizens as empowered partners to foster pro-social behaviors, prevent and reduce crime, and promote nonviolent conflict resolution.
Active Living	Create opportunities for and promote the integration of recreation and physical activity into people's daily routines and the built environment.

## AFFORDABILITY & SOCIAL EQUITY

Government Transparency	Require that local decision-making processes are transparent and evident to the public through the provision of information, participatory tools, education, and an open process.
Revenue Generation	Ensure that public revenue sources are economically sustainable, promote equity and redress existing inequities, and foster healthy ecosystems now and into the future.
Public Expenditures and Financial Investment	Ensure that local government procurement, expenditures, and financial investments support best practices in social responsibility related to employment, environment, and community development.
Infrastructure Investments	Equitably distribute infrastructure, amenities and services, and redress prior disinvestment, to foster community health and create communities of opportunity.
Social Cohesion	Strengthen communities by encouraging communication, partnerships and trust within and among residents, government, and the larger community.
Human Services	Ensure safety net programs are available so that all residents lead lives of dignity and guarantee basic needs are met.
Poverty Prevention and Alleviation	Prevent people from falling into poverty as well as proactively enable those who are living in poverty to obtain greater, lasting economic stability and security
Civil and Human Rights	Promote the full enjoyment by individuals and groups of their political, social and economic civil rights.
Cultural Practices	As relevant to the location, the community integrates traditionally practiced livelihoods and cultural activities in its use of public facilities and areas, governance of private property, planning and development policies and strategies, as well as in other areas of civic life, as appropriate.
Environmental Justice	Develop and enforce government policies and practices that not only contribute to reducing polluted and toxic environments for all residents but also lead to an equitable distribution of the positive and negative environmental effects on the health and wellbeing of communities.
Equity Literacy	Advance the wellbeing of all individuals, particularly the least advantaged, by ensuring citizen and government understanding and skill to support equity in the community.
Adjudication and Restorative Justice	Administer fair and equitable adjudication; involve the community and those convicted of crimes in repairing individual and community scale harm caused by those crimes.
Community Empowerment	Ensure that community members have the skills, resources and assurances needed to participate and lead in defining and implementing decisions affecting individual and community wellbeing.
Equity Assessment and Planning	Identify and analyze patterns of access to foundational community assets, as well as exposure to harms and hazards, and use that information to remedy disparities in access and exposure within and between neighborhoods and populations.



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One hundred fifty  
Amazingly bright people  
It takes a village.

Haiku by Thor Peterson, STAR  
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