

# WASHINGTON COUNTY

## **Sustainability Framework, Principles and Objectives**

Washington County recognizes the role and responsibility for public agencies to protect and conserve natural resources, use financial resources effectively and efficiently, and celebrate the achievements of a healthy and productive community. Sustainability will be a framework for public policy development and day-to-day management of operations. Our intention is to meet current economic, social and environmental needs while ensuring future generations can meet their needs.

### Framework:

- Assess Opportunities - Prepare a baseline emissions inventory and forecast for 1) County operations, and as resources allow 2) community. The inventory and forecast is intended to provide benchmarks for planning purposes and monitoring progress.
- Create Action Plan(s) - Based on the baseline inventory and forecast, prepare a comprehensive action plan with input from stakeholders. The action plan will be updated regularly and may include target reductions, specific interventions and benchmarks.
- Implement Action plan(s).
- Evaluate progress, report results and update action plan(s).

### Principles:

- Future Generations – consider the needs, health and opportunity of future residents, while meeting current needs.
- Stewardship – commit to the efficient and effective use of limited resources and serve as an example towards others.
- Accountability – ensure public funds provide priority infrastructure and services. Strive to get the most benefit from available resources through sound sustainability practices. Evaluate interventions using cost/benefit and/or life cycle cost principles.
- Innovation –commit to best practices, continuous improvement and creativity.
- Prevention - promote healthy and sustainable lifestyles and choices to prevent larger problems.
- Education – engage employees, public and policy makers in the goals, best practices, programs, roles and behaviors that optimize sustainable practices.
- Shared Responsibility – encourage employees, residents, businesses and other community stakeholders to do their part.
- Collaboration – pursue partnerships and collaborative working relationships with public and private partners.

Objectives:

- Realize economic and resource savings through the construction, operation and maintenance of high performance public buildings and landscapes;
- Enhance the fuel efficiency of County fleet vehicles and use of alternate fuels as practicable;
- Enhance recycling rates in County operations and in the community and promote waste reduction at the source;
- Develop sustainable procurement strategies for all County operations where practicable;
- Emphasize land use planning, development, and building policies and practices that promote sustainable communities;
- Protect and foster productive and healthy agriculture, greenspaces and natural resource lands;
- Prioritize energy efficiency and increase the use of renewable energy;
- Support transportation programs and infrastructure that address capacity, multi-modal options, trip reduction and the use of public transportation and car pooling;
- Invest in facilities, equipment, and durable goods that reflect the highest feasible efficiency and lowest life cycle costs;
- Develop and implement communication and education plans to promote and report on the County's sustainability activities and "best practices;"
- Support legislative and economic development initiatives consistent with the County's interests;
- Participate with the Partnership for a Sustainable Washington County Community (PSWCC) and other collaborations to document "best practices," share information and develop collaborative programs and efforts; and
- Monitor and measure progress and report periodically to the Board of Commissioners.