



**SUSTAINABILITY
OFFICE**

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**SUSTAINABILITY DEPARTMENT
Work Plan for FY23**

MISSION

The City of South Portland has become a leader in sustainability across the state of Maine through ambitious climate goals, clean energy investment, and innovative programming. This progress is largely due to the leadership of the Council, very productive partnerships, and overwhelming community support for sustainability.

The mission of the Sustainability Office is to continue our leadership in sustainability by guiding the development of policies and practices that promote economic well-being, strong community connections, and a healthy environment. Our *One Climate Future* plan is the core driver for much of the work we are pursuing and proposing in the coming years to meet our ambitious climate goals:

- ✓ use 100% clean, renewable energy for municipal operations by 2040
- ✓ reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions citywide 80% by 2050
- ✓ build the resilience of our neighborhoods, infrastructure, and ecosystems to the impacts of climate change

In addition to these goals, the City Council declared climate change an emergency in 2019 and expressed its desire to accelerate our transition away from fossil fuels by 2030. This means we will need to continue on our bold course and incorporate climate strategies into all of the municipal services we deliver.

FOCUS AREAS

To achieve these goals, we work across five focus areas. A brief summary of each focus area is below, followed by concrete actions to support implementation.

1. WASTE REDUCTION

Our aim is to minimize waste by changing how our community consumes and disposes of goods and materials. We will improve and expand existing programs that promote reducing, reusing, recycling, and composting, and explore new programs for moving toward zero waste by 2050.

- Work with the Waste Reduction Committee to develop and deliver targeted education and outreach to residents about how and why to reduce, reuse, and recycle. (highlight: recycling bin tagging program, South Portland Recycles App)
- Advocate for and monitor the development of state-level waste reduction policies. (highlight: packaging product stewardship, food waste recycling for large generators)
- Develop a program that encourages businesses to adopt waste reduction practices, supports collaboration between businesses, and recognizes innovation and growth. (highlight: pledge program, Pathway to Clean Energy)
- Finalize economic modeling and develop a proposal for adopting a citywide Pay-As-You-Throw program.
- Continue to expand and improve our citywide food waste program, and pair the introduction of curbside food waste collection with PAYT.
- Review other communities' practices and develop an ordinance to require recycling at multi-family units and businesses.
- Develop useful guidance to promote sustainable purchasing.
- Work with partners to explore opportunities to promote a regional, circular, sharing economy. (highlight: Tool Library)
- Explore and apply for federal, state, and foundation funding wherever possible to support these programs.

2. BUILDINGS & ENERGY USE

Our aim is to make all buildings in South Portland high performing buildings, focusing on energy efficiency, electrification of heating and cooling, and renewable energy. We will advocate for and develop programs and policies to help make this transition financially feasible for residents and businesses.

- Ensure the completion of our contracted solar arrays; develop a financing structure for allocating savings and planning for capital costs of buying out the arrays.
- Finalize the development of, secure funding for, and launch a program to incentivize the adoption of air source heat pumps, hot water heat pumps, weatherization measures, electric vehicles, and solar. (highlight: Electrify Everything!)
- Conduct an analysis of National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) standards to identify if and how constraints for rooftop solar projects could be alleviated.
- Work with industry partners to identify and remove barriers to making affordable, high performing buildings and net zero energy standards the norm in South Portland through a series of meetings with developers, contractors, realtors, and architects.
- Work with the Municipal Facilities Committee to develop a net zero performance-based procurement model for the next appropriate new or renovated City building.

- Implement the City’s Benchmarking Ordinance, helping building owners of 170 properties to comply by May 2023 through: providing trainings and individualized assistance; analyzing the annual energy and water use data and reporting the results; maintaining a database of covered properties with contact information and performance metrics; and developing standards and incentives to improve underperformance.
- Work with Source One to develop a system for tracking City energy data and use it to inform facilities planning for City buildings.
- Develop Municipal Climate Priorities and actively advocate for policy changes at the state level to support implementation of *One Climate Future* initiatives.
- Work with CMP and other partners to improve access to energy data and develop a dynamic hosting capacity study for South Portland.
- Explore and implement options to provide financing for building and energy system upgrades, and apply for federal, state, and foundation funding wherever possible to support these programs. (highlight: C-PACE, grants, revolving loan fund)

3. TRANSPORTATION & LAND USE

Our aim is to minimize emissions associated with transportation by supporting a transition to electric vehicles, the use of alternative fuels, and a substantial community mode shift from private vehicles to public transportation, ride-sharing, biking, and walking.

- Expand the City’s electric vehicle charging infrastructure both at municipal locations and citywide to ensure that it is not only high-impact but also accessible to all members of the community. (highlight: EV charging grant for businesses, RFP for public EV chargers)
- Develop a plan for transitioning our municipal fleet to electric vehicles (focusing on cars, light duty trucks, transit, and school buses) as proven technologies become available and relatively cost effective.
- Explore ways to support broader community adoption of electric vehicles including financial incentives and demonstrations. (highlight: Drive Electric event)
- Work with Public Works to install a biodiesel tank and pump at the MSF for use in heavy duty City vehicles that do not have electric options.
- Keep current on new technologies and grant opportunities related to electric vehicles, smart controls, and advanced grid designs.
- Work with Planning, Transit, and Economic Development to advocate for coordinated regional and state-level transportation policies and programs that support sustainable transportation initiatives and transit oriented development.
- Continue to develop GIS resources and asset management tools in order to better plan for and maintain transportation-related city assets.

- Continue to work with Public Works to implement our Complete Streets policy and Planning to develop and implement traffic calming and active transportation initiatives.
- Work with Planning to include initiatives that will help facilitate a substantial community mode shift to public transportation, ride-sharing, biking, and walking in the Comprehensive Plan Update.
- Explore the potential of bringing a bike share program to South Portland.
- Work with partners to develop an innovative anti-idling campaign for the community; explore anti-idling technologies for municipal vehicles and ensure City anti-idling policies are being followed.
- Leverage state and federal funding wherever possible to support these programs.

4. CLIMATE RESILIENCE

Our aim is to build the resilience of our neighborhoods, infrastructure, ecosystems, and economy to the impacts of climate change. We will work to achieve this by creating tools and resources on climate risks, updating our land use codes to incorporate resilience measures, and protecting and cultivating natural resources within the City.

- Develop a map that overlays neighborhood-level social vulnerabilities, climate risks, and community assets to inform the development of neighborhood-based climate resilience programs. (highlight: Equity Atlas)
- Work with the US Army Corp of Engineers, NOAA, FEMA, and others to develop dynamic flood inundation modeling projections to inform updates to the City's zoning ordinance.
- Work with Planning to develop a resilience zoning overlay for new construction and update land use codes to reflect climate risks and resilience objectives.
- Explore participation in the FEMA Community Rating System to prevent and reduce flood damage to insurable property.
- Work with GPCOG through a national grant to find nature-based solutions that can mitigate coastal flooding.
- Work with Water Resources Protection, Planning, Economic Development, Public Works, Fire, Parks, Recreation & Waterfront, and other departments to develop a system for integrated planning around climate hazards and resilience.
- Work with the LMAC, Parks Dept, and WRP to continue education and outreach about our Landcare Management Ordinance and the importance of healthy soils, including targeted materials for retailers, landcare companies, and demonstration projects. (highlight: 100 Resilient Yards program)

- Work with Planning and Parks to include resilience goals (stormwater and flood water infiltration, carbon sequestration, heat mitigation, and biodiversity and habitat connectivity) in open space planning.
- Work with Planning and Parks to establish a baseline tree inventory and canopy assessment, and finalize the Tree Protection Ordinance.
- Leverage state and federal funding for resilience planning and projects wherever possible.

5. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Our aim is to create a more engaged, equitable, and regenerative community through inclusive processes that build local capacity and create opportunities for collaboration and community ownership. We will do this through developing creative engagement programs that build awareness of sustainability policies, practices, and programs, and integrating equity into all sustainability initiatives.

- Utilize the City's website, OCF website, community newsletters, newspaper articles, and social media to educate community members about sustainability programs.
- Organize workshops, coffee hours, Lunch & Learns, forums, events, and other innovative outreach methods to engage community members on specific issues.
- Attend, give presentations at, and participate in training, forums, and conferences to keep South Portland up to date and a leader on sustainability issues.
- Work with department heads to incorporate *One Climate Future* into all municipal operations. (highlight Comp Plan Update)
- Wherever possible, support inclusive and participatory decision-making and capacity building, with a particular focus on building relationships with organizations that support traditionally underrepresented community members. (highlight: Amjambo Africa, Opportunity Alliance)
- Incorporate equity requirements in all requests for proposals, grant applications, position descriptions, and programming.
- Explore neighborhood-scale action that brings people together and gives residents the opportunity to become active participants in building thriving communities.
- Support the development of young people seeking to work in this field through internships, fellowships, and school projects.