

# CHAPTER 2

## SUSTAINABILITY

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In Resolution 2401, and again in Resolution 2528, the City and Borough of Juneau Assembly committed the CBJ government to a sustainable future that meets today's needs without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs and accepted its responsibility to:

- Support a stable, diverse, and equitable economy;
- Protect the quality of the air, water, land, and other natural resources;
- Conserve native vegetation, fish and wildlife habitats, and ecosystems;
- Minimize human impacts on ecosystems; and
- Minimize energy usage and the release of greenhouse gases.

The concept of sustainability describes a condition in which human use of resources, required for the continuation of life, is in balance with nature's and society's abilities to replenish them. Sustainable communities:

1. Dedicate resources to bring plans for a sustainable future to fruition;
2. Are dedicated to the vitality and integrity of local and global systems;
3. Recognize that the social, economic, political, built, and natural environments need to be managed to sustain a balance, now and in perpetuity;
4. Follow principles that encourage the efficient use of, and avoid the waste of, energy, water, raw materials, and resources, with the goal of preventing environmental degradation;
5. Meet human needs for productive, comfortable, and safe lives; and,
6. Are resilient to social, environmental, and economic challenges.

Resolution 2593, adopting the *Juneau Climate Action and Implementation Plan* (JCAP), was adopted in 2011, and reiterates the need for investigation and action on greenhouse gas emissions, targets, and other opportunities for energy efficiency and implementation of the JCAP.

The *Plan* is infused throughout its chapters with strategies that call for short-term actions that support long-term sustainability. The Vision Statement and Guiding Principles of the *Plan* stated in Chapter 1 provide the framework for developing Sustainability Indicators that guide and measure the viability and adequacy of all *Plan* Policies, SOPs, DGs and IAs.

**POLICY 2.1. TO BUILD A SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY THAT ENDURES OVER GENERATIONS AND IS SUFFICIENTLY FAR-SEEING AND FLEXIBLE TO MAINTAIN THE VITAL AND ROBUST NATURE OF ITS ECONOMIC, SOCIAL, AND ENVIRONMENTAL SUPPORT SYSTEMS.**

**Implementing Actions**

- 2.1 - IA1 Support the CBJ Commission on Sustainability in completing its mission and tasks to:
  - A. Provide ongoing development of sustainability indicators and measures; and,
  - B. Periodically review the indicators and measures to confirm their currency and relevance and to track community trends.
- 2.1 - IA2 Incorporate the adopted sustainability indicators into the process of scoping, funding, and carrying out all proposed CBJ Capital Improvements including buildings, facilities, equipment, and components.
- 2.1 - IA3 Lead a community-wide discussion on the inevitable high costs of importing fossil fuel to the community and the impact of future fossil fuel scarcity. To help the community prepare for and adapt to this future scenario, develop community awareness, actions, and programs that will contribute to energy self-sufficiency.
- 2.1 - IA4 Maintain the greenhouse gas emissions inventory updates annually as recommended by the 2011 *Juneau Climate Action and Implementation Plan (JCAP)*, as well as other recommendations of the JCAP to reduce Juneau’s energy consumption and carbon footprint, and community education. Communicate the findings to the community in a variety of forums with the goal of identifying ways to reduce Juneau’s energy consumption and carbon footprint.
- 2.1 - IA5 Provide ongoing information on the need to adapt to climate change with the goal of developing a community response to negative local impacts.
- 2.1 - IA6 Develop and implement a variety of incentive programs to stimulate innovative conservation practices in residential, commercial and governmental sectors.
- 2.1 - IA7 Initiate community development programs to attract sustainable businesses to Juneau and the Southeast Alaska region.
- 2.1 - IA8 Support socio-economic and cultural diversity with the goal of creating and maintaining a community where individuals can live and thrive for the duration of their lives.
- 2.1 - IA9 Protect ecosystems surrounding the community and preserve their inherent biodiversity.
- 2.1 - IA10 Support the individual and commercial production of foods locally with careful evaluation of environmental impacts.
- 2.1 - IA11 Provide ongoing support to sustain Juneau as a robust governmental center and as a regional hub for goods and services.
- 2.1 - IA12 Amend the Land Use Code to create a new land use category for small-scale energy production facilities, such as solar panels and residentially-scaled wind turbines, so that they are not held to the same permitting requirements as industrial-scale energy production facilities.
- 2.1 - IA13 Adopt energy-efficiency guidelines and/or standards to encourage LEED or similar certification eligible construction by the public and private sectors.

**POLICY 2.2. TO MODEL SUSTAINABILITY THROUGH ITS OPERATIONS, PRACTICES, AND PROJECTS.**

**Standard Operating Procedures**

- 2.2 - SOP1 Perform ongoing analyzes and evaluation of the sustainable implications of CBJ government operations, practices, and projects.

## **Implementing Actions**

- 2.2 - IA1 Complete energy and carbon audits for all CBJ government buildings, facilities, and transportation components (public transit, fleet vehicles, etc).
- 2.2 - IA2 Identify opportunities throughout the CBJ government to conserve energy, use alternative fuels and renewable energy sources, and reduce the community's carbon footprint.
- 2.2 - IA3 Develop administrative policies and procedures, create employee incentive programs, and reward new sustainability promotion ideas that can be practically implemented by CBJ government. Such programs might encourage ride-sharing, more efficient ways to use the city's vehicle fleet, and active participation in recycling.
- 2.2 - IA4 Monitor and measure conservation initiatives and alternative approaches of CBJ government programs at a minimum annually, with ongoing review and refinement from "lessons learned."
- 2.2 - IA5 Maintain and enhance performance standards for the design of all new or renovated CBJ government buildings and provide funding incentives for higher levels of performance.
- 2.2 - IA6 Identify and develop the sustainability expertise of CBJ staff and develop strategies for using the expertise collaboratively throughout CBJ government.

## **Sustainability Indicators**

Indicators show how well a system is working. Effective indicators are:

- Relevant: they show you something about the system that you need to know;
- Easy to understand, even by people who are not expert;
- Reliable: you can trust the information that the indicator is providing;
- Based on accessible data: the information is available and reported at regular intervals.

Indicators help a community judge progress towards its long-term goals. Over time, a community will adjust policies, programs, and collective behavior according to the trends that emerge from using indicators. Indicators reveal the status of large systems, helping a community focus on long-term planning.

Developing indicators begins by selecting important, diverse, measurable categories and topics that the community will commit to measure at regular intervals.

Indicators will be developed by the Juneau Commission on Sustainability and used by appropriate CBJ government agencies and community groups. They will be developed from ongoing issues that emerge in the community. The issues will be organized around social, economic, and environmental categories, although it is expected that issues will overlap categories. The indicators and issues are expected to be modified over time, as the community evaluates its actions and as conditions change. The community's level of sustainability will be measured by evaluating the community's actions, projects, and operations with respect to the indicators. The indicators will generate discussion among people with diverse backgrounds and interests, and, through the process, will help create a shared vision of where the community wants to be.

### **POLICY 2.3. TO DEVELOP AND USE SUSTAINABILITY INDICATORS TO MEASURE JUNEAU'S PROGRESS TOWARD BECOMING A MORE SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY.**

#### **Standard Operating Procedure**

- 2.3 - SOP1 Measure CBJ capital improvements, projects, ordinances, and purchases against adopted sustainability indicators to ensure that the community is moving toward a sustainable future.

## **Implementing Actions**

- 2.3 - IA1 Support the CBJ Commission on Sustainability in completing its mission and tasks to:
- Provide ongoing development of sustainability indicators and measures;
  - Periodically review the indicators and measures to confirm their currency and relevance and to track community trends; and,
  - Incorporate the adopted sustainability indicators into the process of scoping, funding, and carrying out all proposed CBJ Capital Improvements including buildings, facilities, equipment, and components.
- 2.3 - IA2 Periodically assess whether adopted sustainability indicators are measuring sustainability as intended, and amend them as necessary to improve their utility.