

POLICY – ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

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I. Policy

To the extent authorized or permitted by law, the Metropolitan Council will conduct its own operations and use its assets and other authorities to promote environmental sustainability and specifically to:

- 1) increase energy efficiency and the development of renewable energy sources;
- 2) reduce greenhouse gas and other air emissions;
- 3) conserve and protect water resources;
- 4) prevent pollution; and
- 5) reduce solid waste generation, reuse and recycle materials.

To achieve these goals, the Council will: consider environmental sustainability in all its operations and management; pursue environmental sustainability initiatives that are economically feasible; and monitor success in sustainability improvement by periodically evaluating performance on metrics in a published report.

The Council may allow its assets to be used to support sustainability projects, where its core functions will not be jeopardized. This includes, but is not limited to, hosting and participating in sustainability projects that may use Council lands or buildings and provide beneficial opportunities to other governmental entities.

II. Purpose of policy

This policy supports the Council’s statutory mission to help ensure the orderly and economical development of the Region, by:

- Making a difference in the sustainability of Council’s own operations - and leading by example in the Region.
- Supporting and contributing toward the renewable energy objectives in Minnesota Statutes section 216B.1691 by developing and supporting programs that promote renewable energy.
- Providing opportunities for local governments in the Region to also participate in environmentally sustainable programs.

III. Background and reasons for policy

The Council is one of the largest consumers of energy (electricity, natural gas, and motor vehicle fuels) in the State of Minnesota. It is also a large consumer of other goods and services. Through changes in daily operations, ongoing programs, and future facility design, the Council has the potential to



significantly reduce its dependence on fossil fuel energy sources (contributing to Minnesota’s energy security), reduce its greenhouse gas air emissions, use water resources more wisely, and reduce, reuse and recycle materials, all as is prudent for the Region’s future economy and quality of life.

IV. Implementation/Accountability

Each Council division is responsible for carrying out this policy and is accountable for managing and tracking sustainability measures for its own operations and using its own assets.

Environmental Services is responsible for the regional outreach and assistance related to water sustainability. The Community Development division is responsible for the regional outreach and assistance related to all other types of environmental sustainability.

V. Definition of Terms

Greenhouse gas emissions: are emissions responsible for climate change as defined in Minnesota Statutes section 216H.01.

Economic feasible means 1) funding exists to cover the costs of the improvements or the financing for them is secured, and 2) the net present value of the expected cash flows of the improvement over its life cycle is greater than zero.

Other air emissions are criteria air pollutants that are regulated (such as particulate matter and ozone) that may cause the metropolitan area to be considered “non-attainment” and potentially require an expensive mitigation plan.

Sustainability or sustainable is the criteria of meeting present needs without compromising future resources, options, or opportunities.

Pollution prevention is eliminating or reducing at the source the use, generation, or release of toxic pollutants, hazardous substances, and hazardous wastes.

Revision/Review Tracking

Date	Revision No.	Review Only – No changes
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