



# Department of Administrative Services

STATE OF OREGON EXECUTIVE BUILDING

## 2023 Oregon Sustainability Board Agency Sustainability Plan Guidelines



**DAS** DEPARTMENT OF  
ADMINISTRATIVE  
SERVICES  
SUSTAINABILITY PROGRAM



**Oregon Sustainability Board**  
Governor's Sustainability Office  
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# Agency Sustainability Plan Quick Guide

The following Quick Guide outlines the steps that each agency should take – and document – in developing its sustainability plan.

Step	Description	Completed?
<b>Review plan guidance document</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review document before starting for guidance on data sources, selecting topics and developing goals and strategies.</li> </ul>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Collect data, determine impact and opportunity</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Collect environmental, social and economic data.</li> <li>Assess areas of biggest impact or opportunity. Consider agency influence, investment, scope and authority. Use Appendix C, Sustainability Assessment Matrix, as a topical guide.</li> <li>Evaluate both agency operations and external programs.</li> </ul>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Develop strategy for success</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consider what will make the plan relevant and successful.</li> <li>Align plan themes and goals with other agency plans and projects, including Strategic Plan.</li> </ul>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Engage leadership and staff</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Seek input from staff on scope and ideas for actions: surveys, events, sustainability team.</li> <li>Engage agency leadership: briefings, development, plan review.</li> </ul>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Check executive orders and statewide policy</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use plan to track compliance with sustainability-related executive orders (EOs) and statewide policy.</li> <li>Review EOs and policies and integrate into plan goals and actions.</li> </ul>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Develop vision, mission, guiding principles</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Define what sustainability means for your agency.</li> <li>Define your agency's vision or mission for working toward sustainability.</li> <li>Discuss any guiding principles for sustainability in decision making.</li> </ul>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Create long- and short-term goals</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop your agency's specific sustainability goals. Are they short term or long term? Can you specify a target and target date? (<i>e.g., Reduce electricity use 20 percent by 2025</i>).</li> </ul>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Create strategies and actions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What specific strategies and actions will your agency implement to achieve goals? (<i>E.g., to achieve electricity reduction goals, retrofit lighting, reduce plug loads and engage staff in training</i>).</li> </ul>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Implement and sustain the sustainability</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify specific metrics to track progress toward your goals and measure progress annually.</li> <li>Specify FTEs dedicated for plan implementation.</li> <li>Identify who will track metrics as well as specific actions completed.</li> <li>Identify when and how plan will be updated.</li> <li>Identify when and how progress will be shared with staff and leadership and communicated to Oregonians.</li> </ul>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Coordinate with the Sustainability Board and DAS Sustainability</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Anticipate reporting to Board on plan implementation or plan updates every 2-3 years.</li> <li>Seek input, advice and advance review of plans or updates from DAS Office of Sustainability.</li> </ul>	<input type="checkbox"/>

For help on your sustainability plan, contact the DAS Office of Sustainability:

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## A. Introduction

This document provides guidelines to state agencies that are developing sustainability plans or strategies for the first time, or revising existing plans or strategies. The Oregon Sustainability Board (OSB) has designed these guidelines to help agencies put the concepts of sustainability into plans and ultimately practice, contributing to sound stewardship of Oregon’s natural, social and fiscal/economic systems for today and tomorrow.

## B. What is sustainability?

The term sustainability may seem vague or at times overused, but the concept is vital to the future of our natural, social and economic systems. It embraces maintaining and restoring our environment, ensuring social equity and healthy communities and building an economy focused on long-term wellbeing of people and planet.

Definitions of sustainability have proliferated since the first formal definition was offered over 30 years ago. Some definitions focus on environmental impact alone or emphasize the idea of the triple bottom line (measuring performance of organizations or communities on separate economic, environmental and social dimensions). One of the best-known general definitions emerged from a 1987 United Nations report about sustainable development, which was described as development, “meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.” Holistic attempts at defining sustainability have recognized that natural, economic and social systems are so interdependent that they should be considered in an integrated way.

*“Sustainability is improving human well-being and ensuring social equity for present and future generations while safeguarding the planet’s life-supporting ecosystems.”*

Chris Boone, Dean, ASU  
School of Sustainability

*“Sustainable development meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.”*

Brundtland Commission  
1987 report, *Our Common Future*

Various models have been developed to depict sustainability. Figure 1 shows two common models: The hierarchy model and the triple bottom line model. In the hierarchy model, a healthy community depends on a healthy environment, while a healthy economy depends on both a healthy environment and community. The triple bottom line approach speaks more commonly to a balance or optimization of outcomes with respect to the natural environment, community and economy.

Figure 1. Examples of sustainability models.



In Oregon, the Sustainability Act provides a working definition of sustainability for agencies to follow:

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ORS184.421 definition of sustainability: “‘Sustainability’ means using, developing and protecting resources in a manner that enables people to meet current needs and provides that future generations can also meet future needs, from the joint perspective of environmental, economic and community objectives.”

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The Act articulates goals that supplement this definition. Agencies can further tailor this definition to align with their strategic plan, agency priorities and culture. The OSB requests, however, that two concepts be present in all agency sustainability definitions:

- An inter-generational component, meaning that agency actions and decisions are made with long-term implications in mind, not just the here and now, or next political cycle.
- That sustainability is not just about “green practices;” rather, it has a focus on environmental, social/community *and* economic objectives.

## C. History of sustainability in Oregon state government

Whether it was formally called “sustainability” or not, the concept has long been a part of how Oregonians live, and the state of Oregon operates. Formally, the Legislature established the state’s overall sustainability policy when it adopted the Oregon Sustainability Act (ORS 184.423). Today, the Act remains the foundation for sustainability policy, and planning by state agencies and the OSB (Appendix A).

Several executive orders (EOs) have guided state agency sustainability efforts and the work of the OSB since adoption of the Act. In 2003, Governor Kulongoski signed EO 03-03 directing the OSB to work with a specified list of 20 agencies to develop sustainability plans. In 2006, Governor Kulongoski signed EO 06-02, Sustainability for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, which outlined several initiatives for the OSB, but also reinforced the OSB’s role of working with state agencies on sustainability plans, as well as updating and improving the planning process and monitoring and measuring achievements.

Beyond legislation and EOs guiding OSB and agency sustainability efforts, statewide policy and practices among state agencies continue to further sustainability – from climate mitigation and adaptation to fleet, procurement, energy, waste, water resources and equity.

## D. Why develop a strategy or plan?

As public entities, state agencies are entrusted with the wellbeing of Oregon’s resources and its people. Sustainability helps public agencies be more efficient with taxpayer dollars, adapt to a changing future, be good stewards of natural resources and support equity in the workplace and our communities. A [OSB-sponsored survey](#) of Oregon state government on sustainability, completed in 2018, showed agency staff members are highly supportive of sustainability, and that agency leadership and staff are well aligned in the benefits of sustainability in both agency operations and in programs delivered to Oregonians.

Beyond Oregon, various initiatives are showing that sustainability is here to stay. From a business perspective the global business management consulting firm AT Kearney’s 2009 report *Green Winners* noted in 16 of 18 industry sectors examined, companies recognized as sustainability leaders outperformed industry peers over a six-month period during the 2008 economic crisis, and they were more protected from value erosion. Stock prices of 99 sustainability- oriented companies outperformed industry averages by 15 percent over the six-month period. The Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education is comprised of over 900 colleges and universities across 48 U.S. states, 1 U.S. Territory, 9 Canadian provinces and 20 countries. And the U.S. Green Building Council’s Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) standards have been applied over 85,000 buildings around the world.

#### Plan, strategy, or something else?

While the term “plan” is frequently used in this document, agencies can outline their approach to sustainability in ways most effective to them. For example, rather than a stand-alone sustainability plan, an agency may instead map out a strategy for integrating sustainability into existing plans (e.g., facility plans). In either case, agencies are requested to apply the planning process below to their efforts.

By having a sustainability plan, strategy or roadmap, agencies can deliberately and effectively conduct operations and develop and deliver programs that optimize environmental, social and economic/fiscal outcomes. They can do so by setting goals, taking actions and measuring progress toward a more sustainable future.

## E. The planning process

While each agency should develop their sustainability plans or strategies in a manner that meets their agency structure and culture, the OSB recommends 8 core steps to help ensure creation of a well thought out plan that reflects agency priorities (from both a strategic and staff perspective), establishes goals and actions, sets out to measure progress and adapts the plan based on findings and accomplishments (Figure 2).

In addition to the 8 steps in Figure 2, agencies should consider the following:

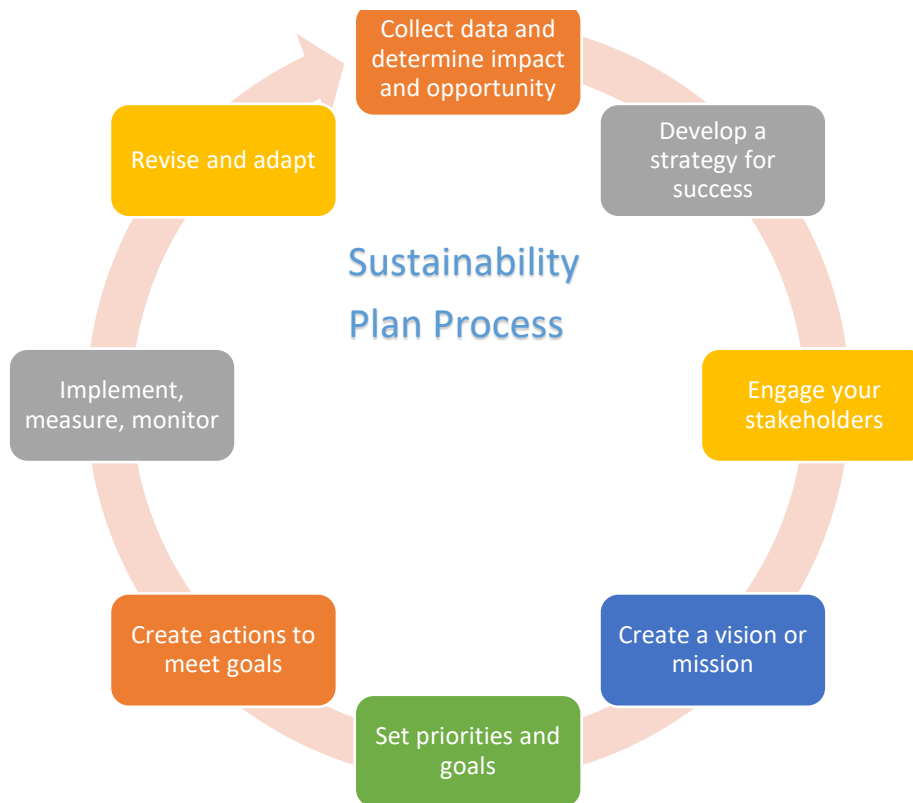
**Assemble a core team:** Agencies should assemble a core team to develop its plan. This team should be interdisciplinary and may include sustainability coordinators, facilities managers, volunteer sustainability teams or others. The more interdisciplinary the team, the more diverse perspectives will be added to the discussion to ensure the plan represents a range of topics, priorities and opportunities.

**Define the lifespan of the plan:** Agencies should consider the “lifespan” of the plan and when it will be updated. This could be a biennium to align with the budgeting process, or a longer term (five years or longer) realizing goals may take that long, or longer, to accomplish. Consider balancing the desire for updates with the effort and resources to conduct plan updates.

**Apply an agency-specific approach:** However, your agency approaches the planning process, the OSB requests plans that are clear and concise, and it expects that plans will be scaled in complexity to the size and scope of the agency. Larger agencies with extensive assets, a greater impact and more resources are expected to have more extensive plans compared to agencies with small staffs, few owned assets and smaller programs.



Figure 2. Core sustainability planning steps



## 1. Collect data, determine impact and opportunity

### Collect Data

As an initial step, your agency’s core planning team should collect available data to provide a snapshot of the agency’s current footprint, and to scope out opportunities and priorities. This may include collecting data on operational topics (e.g., energy use, water use, waste and recycling, fleet, procurement, greenhouse gas emissions), as well as programmatic topics (e.g., impacts of programs, equity in delivery of programs, economic/fiscal impacts). This will help inform initial assessments that can then be revisited and adjusted as an agency determines its areas of greatest impact and opportunity.

At this early stage, the OSB requests that the core team discuss what sustainability means for your agency. Does your agency address sustainability in its strategic plan, mission statement or other documents? How can the concept and definition of sustainability in ORS 184.421 be framed to be most relevant to your agency’s leadership and staff?

### Operations vs. programmatic opportunities

The OSB appreciates the progress that agencies have already made in adjusting their internal operations to reduce waste, save energy and water and purchase more sustainable products. Agencies should continue these efforts, particularly those agencies with significant assets (e.g., fleet, buildings, and large number of leased spaces).

The OSB requests that agencies also examine the policies, services and programs it manages, with an eye toward sustainability in the delivery of such programs, as well as their sustainability outcomes for present and future generations of Oregonians (Table 1). In some cases, potential sustainability impacts and opportunities are far greater in an agency’s programs than in internal operations.

Table 1: Examples of operational and programmatic impacts

Examples of operational impacts	Examples of programmatic impacts
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Energy and resource use in buildings</li> <li>• Fleet fuel consumption</li> <li>• Landscaping practices</li> <li>• Procurement practices</li> <li>• Waste reduction and recycling</li> <li>• Climate change and greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Impacts of programs, initiatives, and decisions                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Oregon’s environment</li> <li>○ Oregon’s people and communities</li> <li>○ Oregon’s long-term economic health</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

Determine impact

Planning for sustainability can entail evaluating a wide range of topics and impacts. How do you identify areas of greatest impact or highest priorities for your plan? Asking some strategic questions will help your agency’s core team filter and prioritize topics for inclusion in the plan. Appendix B contains a matrix of example environmental, social and economic topics.

Assets

A quick assessment of an agency’s assets can provide guidance on where to focus attention. Does your agency own several buildings, or does it lease significant space? Is there a large vehicle fleet, or does the agency own significant land assets?

Cost/Spend

Spending patterns can also reveal impacts and opportunities. What categories of goods comprise the greatest agency spend? Are there certain buildings where utility bills are high? This might reveal opportunities for “greener” products and practices, or reduced consumption to lower costs.

Influence

Your agency’s greatest opportunity to make a difference may be in those areas where you can influence or support others in the community.

- Visibility (e.g., increasing recycling at a building with high volume of public visitors)
- Support for community initiatives (e.g., participating in a local campaign to eliminate mercury switches and thermometers)

Investment

To what extent can sustainability contribute to the agency financially, or in terms of improved staff morale, safety or customer relations? Criteria could include:

- Cost effectiveness (e.g., switching to energy-efficient lighting)
- Timely activities (e.g., focusing on a large upcoming construction project)
- Ease of implementation (e.g., integrating sustainability into an existing process improvement project)

Scope and Authority

To what extent can your agency move the needle on a particular sustainability topic? What authority does it have? This may be a particularly relevant question for agencies (e.g., OMD, ODOT) that have both federal and state requirements to which they must also respond.

DAS can provide a simple “Sustainability Scan” tool that can help agencies scope out sustainability impacts and opportunities. It can also be used to review specific projects or decisions and optimize them with a sustainability lens.



*Sustainability Act Goals*

Sustainability plans should also take into account how your agency complies with the various goals of the Oregon Sustainability Act. Readers are encouraged to review the full text of the Act’s goals in Appendix A. Table 2 provides a summary of goals and relationship to agency activities.

Table 2: Summary of Sustainability Act goals for agencies

Topic	
<b>Agency procurements</b>	Serve the broad, long term financial interests of Oregonians, including ensuring that environmental, economic and societal improvements are made to enhance environmental, economic and societal well-being. Support opportunities for economically distressed communities and historically underemployed people.
<b>Agency investments, facilities, equipment and durable goods</b>	Implement highest feasible efficiency and lowest life cycle costs. Promote improvements in the efficient use of energy, water and resources.
<b>Locating agency facilities</b>	Support rural and distressed communities. Maintain vital and active downtown and main street communities. Reflect partnerships with communities and businesses. Reduce adverse impacts on native habitats and species and help restore ecological processes.
<b>Agency operations</b>	Use energy, water and resources efficiently and reduce contaminants released into the environment.
<b>Agencies promoting sustainable communities</b>	Agencies should enable and encourage: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Resilient local economies that provide a diversity of economic opportunities for all citizens.</li> <li>• Workers supported by lifelong education to ensure a globally competitive workforce.</li> <li>• An independent and productive citizenry.</li> <li>• Youth supported by strong families and communities.</li> <li>• Downtowns and main street communities that are active and vital.</li> <li>• Development that wisely and efficiently uses infrastructure investments and natural resources.</li> <li>• Affordable housing available for citizens in community centers.</li> <li>• Healthy urban and rural watersheds, including habitats for fish and wildlife.</li> <li>• Clean and sufficient water for all uses.</li> <li>• Efficient use and reuse of resources and minimization of harmful emissions to the environment.</li> <li>• Intensification of efforts to increase the economic stability of communities designated as economically distressed.</li> </ul>

Impact and opportunity: The environmental pillar

The environmental pillar of sustainability is likely most familiar to agencies. Many agencies have long addressed topics such as energy efficiency, water conservation and waste in their operations. Climate change mitigation and adaptation have also become critical issues for which agencies should identify and implement action in accordance with executive orders, and to lead by example.

Beyond operations, agencies should also discuss how external programs and initiatives will impact environmental sustainability metrics for the people of Oregon. Will a new program or decision significantly increase energy use or vehicle miles traveled? What impact will it have on land, or on your agency’s water use or carbon footprint?

The DAS Office of Sustainability can help your agency identify the best sources for the data listed in Table 3.

Table 3. Potential environmental metrics and data sources

Topic	Suggested metrics	Potential data sources and support
<b>Energy</b>	Energy efficiency, conservation, renewables	Utility bills, direct meter/sub-meter reads, ODOE annual agency energy reports; ODOE Biennial Energy Report
<b>Water</b>	Water efficiency, conservation, water quality	Utility bills, OWRD water rights database, water use tools/estimators. DEQ water quality monitoring data, instream flow for fish.
<b>Waste</b>	Waste reduction, reuse, recycling, waste recovery rate	Waste hauler invoices, material weight estimates from DEQ or the U.S. EPA. In Salem, recycling data from Garten Services. Includes composting.
<b>Transportation</b>	Miles traveled, carbon intensity of modes of transportation	DAS Fleet and Parking services, commuter surveys.
<b>Climate mitigation</b>	Total greenhouse gas emissions from all sources (buildings, fleet, stationary fuels, refrigerants, etc.)	G3C Climate Action Planning Tool licensed by Good Company for agencies to calculate their GHG emissions. The Tool includes calculators for buildings, fleet, commuting and other travel, procurement and waste. The DAS Office of Sustainability can provide agencies the Tool as well as access to data for calculating GHG emissions.
<b>Air quality</b>	Impacts to criteria pollutants	DEQ air quality monitoring data
<b>Habitat/Land use</b>	Impacts to land, wildlife habitats	<a href="http://compass.dfw.state.or.us/">http://compass.dfw.state.or.us/</a>
<b>Biodiversity</b>	Direct impacts to flora and fauna	Contacts for local offices: <a href="https://www.dfw.state.or.us/agency/directory/local_offices.asp">https://www.dfw.state.or.us/agency/directory/local_offices.asp</a>
<b>Procurement</b>	Dollars spent on environmentally preferable products through state price agreements.	DAS Procurement, Sustainable Procurement Program Manager, Adam Helvey, <a href="mailto:adam.helvey@das.oregon.gov">adam.helvey@das.oregon.gov</a>

### *Climate Change*

A number of agencies are directed by EO 20-04 to make climate change a priority in their policies, budgeting and planning activities. Other agencies, particularly those with physical assets (including privately leased facilities) are strongly encouraged to address climate change due to the critical nature of this significant issue. Agencies may wish to do so either in their sustainability plans or in stand-alone climate action plans. Climate is a cross-cutting issue, and many agency actions will have direct or indirect impacts on GHG emissions. GHG emissions are frequently divided into three “scopes” as shown in Table 4.

Table 4: Examples of direct and indirect GHG emissions

Scope 1: Direct emissions	Scope 2: Indirect emissions	Scope 3: Emissions related to but not directly controlled by agency
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fossil fuels for heating buildings</li> <li>Fleet fossil fuel consumption</li> <li>Other stationary sources, e.g., diesel generators</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Electricity purchased from a utility for lighting, cooling, etc.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Employee commuting</li> <li>Emissions from solid waste disposal</li> <li>Emissions embodied in goods and services purchased by agency</li> </ul>

Agencies are directed to use the 2022 Agency Climate Action Planning Tool developed by DAS and OSB, with assistance from ODOT and a consultant team, to track their GHG emissions from Scopes 1, 2 and 3 and set specific reduction goals for their operations that align with [the stated goals in EO 20-04](#) or the Paris Climate Accord – both goals are pre-populated in the Tool. This Tool has been licensed to state of Oregon agencies for free use. Agencies that do not yet have access to the Tool and companion guidebook should contact the DAS Office of Sustainability.

At a minimum, agencies are directed to track and report emissions on owned buildings and fleet using readily available data from DAS and ODOE. While the latter will not be as complete, applying these methods consistently will give an agency a sense of a large portion of their Scope 1 and 2 GHG emission trends over time. For Scope 3 GHG emissions not directly controlled, agencies can still evaluate decisions using the Agency Climate Action Planning Tool and how they affect GHG emissions. For example, reducing waste and recycling more can help lower waste-related emissions. While agency operational GHG emissions are in many cases significantly smaller than emissions associated with external agency programs and decisions, tracking them, setting goals and taking action helps agencies identify cost and resource efficiencies, and lead by example.

Agencies are also strongly encouraged to factor in climate change considerations as they evaluate other programs or decisions. Some agencies have already received directives from previous EOs to do so. For example, will locating new facilities require staff and visitors to drive more, or is transit available? What effect will a program have on people’s energy use, or on businesses that promote renewable energy? These and similar questions should be integrated into agency efforts such as policy development, program design and grant funding initiatives to prevent or minimize GHG impacts.

Beyond mitigating GHG emissions, agencies are also strongly encouraged to plan for the impacts of an already changing climate. While the 2019 statewide [Climate Adaptation Framework](#) provides guidance for how agencies should plan for climate change, specific actions are largely left up to individual agencies. Agencies may wish to use the sustainability plan as a method for documenting these actions, or they may opt to prepare a stand-alone

**The social cost of carbon**

[The Social Cost of Carbon: A Guide for State Officials](#) (link coming) outlines how state agencies can integrate the societal costs of GHG emissions into their decision making. The social cost of carbon is a set of estimates of how much damage results, in monetary terms, from the emission of one additional metric ton of carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>), methane (CH<sub>4</sub>), or nitrous oxide (N<sub>2</sub>O). By indicating the monetary cost to society of releasing GHGs, it is possible to say how worthwhile it would be to reduce or avoid the activity—to weigh the benefit of doing so against the costs.

climate adaptation strategy. Agencies are encouraged to contact the [Department of Land Conservation and Development](#) for the latest updates on the Framework.

### The Social Pillar

The concept of equity and social justice underpins the social pillar of sustainability. Social justice represents a belief that there are some things which people should have, that there are basic needs that should be fulfilled, that burdens and rewards should not be spread too divergently across the community, and that policy should be directed with impartiality, fairness and justice towards these ends.

Sustainability plans provide an opportunity for agencies to examine the programs and initiatives they deliver to the people and communities of Oregon, and to consider the social dimensions of sustainability such as equity and environmental justice. Does the program affect issues such as transportation, housing, public health or education? How can it be delivered with equity in mind, and avoid disproportionate impacts to communities of color or low-income communities?

Equity and social sustainability also encompass the *process* of engagement and participation in decision-making and ensuring that all voices and perspectives can be heard in developing programs or initiatives. This involves meeting vulnerable communities where they are and providing opportunity for meaningful participation in decision-making.

The OSB acknowledges that agencies, the Governor’s Office and others have already dedicated time and resources to addressing equity in internal agency operations (e.g., diversity in hiring, equity in compensation, staff access to resources, etc.). The OSB believes these topics are best addressed by agency human resources staff and other Diversity Equity Inclusion (DEI) subject matter experts and does not encourage their inclusion in sustainability plans. While the scope of social sustainability topics and metrics is vast, the OSB offers a few suggestions to agencies below (Table 5).

**Equity in Action: Department of Land Conservation and Development (DLCD)’s Climate-Friendly and Equitable Communities Rulemaking**

To help develop the rulemaking process, DLCD held a workshop facilitated by a community organization to discuss equity approaches. In response to this dialogue, DLCD funded staff time for participation of seven equity-centered community-based organizations in its rulemaking advisory committee and provided one-on-one staff check-ins for those organizations throughout the rulemaking process to elevate their voices and help them engage as desired.

Table 5: Potential social sustainability metrics

Potential Topics	Metrics	Potential data sources and support
<b>Equity</b>	Varied	Depends on project. See King County, Washington’s <a href="#">The Determinants of Equity</a> for example guidance.
<b>Environmental justice</b>	Various environmental and demographic indicators and indexes	U.S. Environmental Protection Agency EJ Screen tool: <a href="https://www.epa.gov/ejscreen">https://www.epa.gov/ejscreen</a>
<b>Education</b>	Educational opportunity and attainment	U.S. Census: <a href="https://www.census.gov/data.html">https://www.census.gov/data.html</a> Oregon Department of Education
<b>Housing</b>	Housing affordability, housing availability	U.S. Census Oregon Housing and Community Services
<b>Transportation choices</b>	Accessibility, mobility, affordability, safety.	Commute surveys, mapping Oregon Department of Transportation
<b>Staff engagement</b>		Staff surveys

Since equity is a broad yet critically important topic, the OSB suggests that agencies apply an equity “lens” to decisions using the [Climate Equity Blueprint](#). The Blueprint was published in January 2021 as a companion document for the Climate Adaptation Framework. While its stated focus is on climate, the tools it offers can apply to any agency equity decision. The Blueprint is organized around four pillars – Build Internal Capacity, Embed Equity & Accountability into Design, Lead Meaningful Community Engagement and Improve Data Collection and Use (Figure 3). In addition to the resources and case studies in the Blueprint, Appendix C of these Guidelines contains a decision-making checklist with critical questions summarized from the Blueprint that agencies should find helpful to ask as they develop new programs. At a minimum, agency sustainability plans should outline and summarize how the agency has incorporated equity into its decision-making and program development efforts, with a few illustrative examples.

Agencies should also consult the state of Oregon’s [DEI Action Plan](#) for further direction and consult with the [Environmental Justice Council](#) and their 2016 Handbook for additional support. While the Council has historically engaged with natural resource agencies, all agencies developing sustainability plans are encouraged to review the Council’s resources.

Figure 3. Applying an equity lens to agency decisions



### The Fiscal/Economic Pillar

Agencies are also encouraged to apply, wherever feasible, long-term thinking about costs and benefits of decisions. While it is easy to jump to a conclusion about costs based on one-time, up-front costs, this approach does not tell the whole story when evaluating fiscal decisions and priorities. For example, while a capital expense may have a higher up-front cost than an alternative, the total cost of ownership – considering life of the product, operations and maintenance costs, energy costs and so on – might make that choice significantly preferable over the long term.



## 2. Develop a strategy for success

Before embarking on developing or updating sustainability plan elements, agencies should think strategically about the factors that will make the plan relevant and successful. Is there specific language, or are there themes, that will resonate with leadership and staff?

The core team should review their agency’s strategic plan, other major policies, key performance indicators, administrative rules or related statute identify ways sustainability can help accomplish other agency objectives. For example, if your agency’s strategic plan emphasizes efficiency, consider this as a theme in your sustainability plan by conserving resources. Or perhaps your agency has a policy on the equitable distribution of programs to Oregonians – that too could be a vital “hook” for the success of your plan.

If you are unable to find good hooks in other agency documents for sustainability, consider making recommendations to integrate sustainability considerations into your agency’s strategic planning and key performance measurement efforts. The updated DAS 2022 Strategic Plan addresses equity, sustainability, climate and energy in its values and key goals.

## 3. Engage leadership and staff

To build support for plan adoption and implementation, your agency’s leadership and staff should be able to see themselves in the plan, to understand where they can help implement it and how it will benefit both them and Oregonians alike. That starts with giving them opportunity and ownership in the development process.

Agencies should consider a variety of tools and tactics to engage and build support:


- Newsletters
- Suggestion boxes where staff can submit ideas
- Small focus groups around specific topics
- A steering committee representing senior level staff and leadership
- “Pop up” events or open houses where staff can drop in, learn and comment
- Web surveys to identify priorities

The core team should also see the OSB, DAS Office of Sustainability and other agencies as resources for support and are encouraged to reach out and contact others for ideas. In many cases, another agency may already have developed a similar goal, actions or metrics that your agency can include in your plan. Examples of agency plans are posted on the [Office of Sustainability website](#).

## 4. Cross check against EOs and statewide policy, and use plan as a vehicle to address them

Because of their interdisciplinary nature, sustainability plans serve as good vehicles for an agency to track reporting and progress on various EOs or statewide policy. Sustainability goals and strategies can be structured to integrate components of EOs or policy, and they can serve as unified reporting mechanisms (Table 6).

DEPARTMENT OF  
ADMINISTRATIVE  
SERVICES



## We support state government to serve the people of Oregon.

### VISION

By providing reliable service, accurate information and creative solutions, we strive to set the standard for good government and lead state agencies in furthering policy and budgetary goals.

### KEY GOALS

**OREGONIANS ARE SERVED BY STRONG AGENCIES AND A STRONG PUBLIC WORKFORCE**

- The state of Oregon is working toward building a diverse workforce of talented individuals driven by a greater good to serve the people of Oregon.
- Give agencies of all sizes the support they need to perform their duties and carry out the policy and budgetary goals set forth by the Governor and the Oregon Legislature.

### VALUES

- A tailored approach to governance through partnership and collaboration.
- Striving to make state government an employer of choice, incorporating a flexible and nimble workplace to attract and retain a diverse workforce.
- Building racial equity into the foundation of state government.
- Investing in sustainable operations for a better climate future.

**AGENCY RESOURCES ARE AVAILABLE AND USED EFFICIENTLY, EFFECTIVELY AND TRANSPARENTLY**

- New agency projects, programs and initiatives are delivered on time and on budget.
- Agency operations and projects are performed ethically and transparently.
- Uphold and demonstrate a commitment to sustainability and energy efficiency in agency operations.

**AGENCIES USE TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATIVE TOOLS TO DRIVE SUCCESS**

- Modernize Oregon’s enterprise systems and tools while attaining the highest levels of security and reliability.
- Continuously improve enterprise IT governance and ensure agencies understand their role and priorities.
- Leverage technology that connects agencies, citizens, and government to improve efficiencies for the people of Oregon.



Table 6: Sample EO reporting matrix from the DAS Sustainability Plan

Executive Order (EO) or Statewide Policy	Agency compliance efforts	Relationship to plan components
EO 17-11: Relating to affirmative action, equal employment opportunity, diversity, equity, and inclusion	The DAS sustainability team is following the lead of the CHRO, which is working on several initiatives.	Goals and strategies related to supporting staff.
EO 17-20: Accelerating efficiency in Oregon's built environment to reduce GHG emissions and address climate change	DAS serves on the working group to implement the EO. DAS is coordinating with ODOE on plug load strategy and procurement of efficient equipment.	Goals and strategies related to energy and material flows – procurement.
EO 17-21: Accelerating zero emission vehicle adoption in Oregon to reduce GHG emissions and address climate change	DAS serves on the working group to implement the EO. DAS is coordinating with DEQ and ODOE to implement various individual components of the EO.	Goals and strategies related to fleet/transportation.
EO 20-04: Directing state agencies to take actions to reduce and regulate GHG emissions	DAS developed a response document outlining how every agency division could take steps to reduce GHG emissions. DAS and OSB also developed GHG tool for agencies.	Goals and strategies specifically related to GHG reductions.
EO 21-20: Directing state agencies to support communities in drought by curtailing nonessential water use, implementing water conservation measures, and encouraging drought resiliency	DAS is tracking year-over-year water use to make progress toward the EO reduction goals. Irrigation has been cut back and leaks/system losses are being evaluated.	Goals and strategies related to water.
Statewide Energy and Resource Conservation Policy 107-011-010	DAS is enforcing elements of the policy in its own buildings and educating tenants. DAS is also leading up a major update of the policy.	Strategies across multiple topics relate to and support the policy.
Sustainable Procurement and Internal Operations Policy 107-011-140	Comprehensive sustainable procurement approach being formulated by Procurement.	Goals and strategies related to material flows, procurement.
Fleet Management, Statewide Policy 107-011-040	Being carried out by Fleet and Parking Services.	Goals and strategies related to fleet/transportation boost compliance with the policy.
Green Chemistry Procurement Policy 107-009-0080	Integrated into DAS price agreements.	Procurement goals and strategies related to metrics and training.
Sustainable Acquisition and Disposal of Electronic Equipment, Policy 107-011-050	DAS waste reduction, reuse and recycling guidelines include direction for DAS and other agencies on how to dispose of IT equipment.	Not specifically addressed in the Plan as compliance is underway.

5. Develop a sustainability vision, mission and/or guiding principles

Agencies should consider developing a sustainability vision or mission statement as part of the planning process – or referencing an existing vision or mission statement. Having a future-looking statement of desired outcomes or intention can often help motivate staff to participate in working toward long-term aspirations. Most agency strategic plans will have some sort of statement of vision, mission and or values.

**University of Oregon Sustainability  
Mission**

The Office of Sustainability’s mission is to lead the integration of sustainability into the University of Oregon’s operations, curriculum, co-curriculum, research, and engagement with the community.

## 6. Create short-term and long-term goals

Aligning with priority topics, agencies should develop goals to frame specific outcomes.

Goals can be structured in a variety of ways. They can be open ended, specify a specific date for achievement and/or identify a specific metric-driven target to reach. They can be short-term, long term or a combination of both. Finally, they can be incremental and “safe”, bold and visionary in ways that stretch an agency’s capacity to achieve them, or a combination.

The OSB encourages agencies to use specific metrics and timelines in its goal setting process. This provides a tangible framework around which to organize specific actions, and to measure progress with the use of metrics. The OSB also encourages agencies to set goals for the short and long term so that tactically resources can be allocated to achieving short-term goals while longer-term goals can drive creativity and innovation during the current leadership and beyond.

Finally, agencies should align their goals with the Governor’s priorities and other broader sustainability efforts. For example, Governor Brown has committed Oregon to climate goals outlined in EO 20-04, while EO 17-20 establishes specific energy intensity goals for agency buildings.

## 7. Create strategies and actions to support goals

Strategies and actions constitute the specific actions an agency pledges to take to reach its sustainability goals. For each goal, examine what it will take to reach the goal. While no agency is likely to be able to implement its actions all at once, the following factors may help to prioritize them:

- **Quick Wins:** Choose the easily accomplished, low-cost actions that will show measurable progress in the near term.
- **Cost Savings:** Choose actions that demonstrate cost savings to the agency and the state. Some of these cost savings can help fund future sustainability efforts.
- **Efficiencies:** Choose actions that improve government efficiency, delivering better service or serving more customers, with no increase in cost.
- **Educational/Visible:** Choose actions with educational value for employees or others. Employees and others will be able to see what you are doing and will be told why you are doing it.
- **Synergy:** The benefits and lessons can be used in many other agencies, multiplying the benefits many times over. Your actions might be the catalyst for many other positive actions.
- **Comprehensive:** Agencies should review their actions to optimize the impact they have on the three legs of sustainability: economy, society and environment.
- **Use Your Leverage:** Do we have real leverage to act on this item at all?
- **Make a Difference:** If we took action on this item, would it make much difference to enhancing our sustainability?
- **Adjust Current Activities:** Are there opportunities to modify existing agency activities to make a change rather than starting something new?

### Example: DAS Climate Goals

Reduce DAS GHG emissions in the current portfolio by 26 to 28% below 2005 levels by 2025 to align with the U.S. Paris Agreement and Oregon Governor’s goals.

*Long-term aspiration: All DAS buildings will be operating as carbon neutral by 2050.*

## 8. Implement, communicate and sustain the sustainability

Solely preparing a sustainability plan is not enough – it must be implemented and actively managed with progress measurement, checking that actions are being completed, monitoring progress toward goals with metrics and

adapting to changing conditions as needed (Tables 7 and 8). This is “sustaining the sustainability” through a constant plan-do-check-act process.

Agencies should ensure they have dedicated sufficient full time equivalent (FTE) staff to implement their plans. This will vary from agency to agency, but plans cannot be effectively implemented without the staff to do so. Plans should indicate specifically what level of FTEs have been assigned, whether it is a facility manager, a green team, or some combination of the two.

Agencies should indicate how they will communicate to Oregonians about their sustainability efforts. State agencies can lead by example, and this should be reflected in agency newsletters, on social media or by other communication means.

Table 7: Example metric reporting structure







Metric	Unit	Measure	Trends
Energy consumption	Kilowatt hours (kWh)	Calculated from utility bills through the Energy CAP software.	 Energy use intensity (EUI) is improving in DAS buildings, and overall energy use has decreased since 2018.
Water consumption	Thousand gallons (gals)	Calculated from utility bills for buildings, and from meter readings on DAS’ three wells, used for irrigation.	 Water use fell over 30 percent from the 2014 baseline. Irrigation use fell 35 percent.
Waste diversion	Tons	Amount of material diverted from landfill and recycled, salvaged or composted. Calculated from recycling totals and trash weight estimates by building, and for DAS as a whole.	 Diversion across the building portfolio was approximately 55 percent.
Paper and green office supplies	Dollars	Amount of green and non-green office supplies.	 The ratio of green to non-green office supply purchases declined.
Fleet carbon emissions per mile	Tons of carbon dioxide equivalent.	Calculated from vehicle fuel mix and vehicle miles traveled.	 Slight decline from 2018-2020.
GHG emissions	Tons of carbon dioxide equivalent.	Calculated using the agency Climate Action Planning Tool. Approximately 76 percent of emissions are from purchased electricity.	 DAS has compiled baseline GHGs for 2018-2020. Trends will be established with additional years of data.
Staff engaged in sustainability (education, events, trainings)	Number, percent of staff	Not yet calculated.	Will be calculated moving forward as part of new sustainability plan goals and strategies related to staff engagement.

Table 8: Sample of sustainability plan management framework

What	Who	When
Track implementation of strategies and progress toward goals	Sustainability staff to coordinate with various divisions to collect data and report progress on strategies.	Quarterly
Track performance metrics	Sustainability to collect data in coordination with the O&M Energy Analyst.	Quarterly
Compile sustainability progress report, report to Executive Team and share with staff	Agency sustainability team	Annually

Meeting of Steering Committee to review progress and adjust strategies/goals as needed	Sustainability Plan Steering Committee	Annually
Revise overall sustainability plan	Agency sustainability team	Every 3-5 years
Staff engagement: communication, training, education, action	Agency sustainability team	Ongoing

Agencies should integrate plans into their overall work programs and actively manage their implementation. An implementation “workbook” may be helpful to track progress, trends, metrics, accountability and reporting of progress to the OSB.

## F. OSB review of plans

The OSB strives to review 8-10 agency sustainability plans per year. This may be review of a new plan, a plan revision or progress toward the goals in an existing plan.

The OSB will review plans or updates and either approve them or provide feedback to agencies with comments and requested improvements. Among the criteria the OSB will use to review plans include:

- Has the agency meaningfully discussed and identified its sustainability impacts and opportunities, both in operations and programs?
- Have clear sustainability goals been set to address these impacts and opportunities?
- Does the plan include meaningful actions and timelines to achieve goals?
- What structure or mechanisms will the agency use to implement the plan and track progress?
- What level of staffing has the agency dedicated to its sustainability program? Are there sufficient FTEs?
- How is the agency communicating its sustainability progress to Oregonians?
- What progress has the agency tangibly made on:
  - Progress: completing actions in the plan
  - Performance: “moving the needle” on key sustainability metrics

Agencies are strongly encouraged to utilize the checklist at the front of this document to ensure that major plan elements and development steps are addressed.

Agency leadership and sustainability staff will be invited to present progress or updates to the OSB every 2-3 years. Once approved, plans will be posted to the [agency sustainability plan website](#).

## Appendix A: Oregon Sustainability Act

The State Legislature adopted sustainability policies in the Oregon Sustainability Act, ORS184.421. Your agency may benefit from having its own policy statement that articulates how sustainability supports the agency's mission, goals, and values. If you decide to pursue an agency policy statement, be certain it reflects the policies stated below.

The state policies are divided into two sections: general sustainability policies and policies focused on community development. They are provided here for reference:

**General State Sustainability Policy:** In conducting internal operations, state agencies shall, in cooperation with the Oregon Department of Administrative Services, seek to achieve the following objectives:

- a. State purchases should be made so as to serve the broad, long term financial interests of Oregonians, including ensuring that environmental, economic and societal improvements are made so as to enhance environmental, economic and societal well-being.
- b. Investments in facilities, equipment and durable goods should reflect the highest feasible efficiency and lowest life cycle costs.
- c. Investments and expenditures should help promote improvements in the efficient use of energy, water and resources.
- d. State operations should be located in diverse locations, including rural and distressed communities.
- e. State operations and purchases should help maintain vital and active down- town and main street communities.
- f. State purchases should help support opportunities for economically distressed communities and historically underemployed people.
- g. State operations should reflect partnerships with communities and businesses.
- h. State operations should help reduce adverse impacts on native habitats and species and help restore ecological processes.
- i. State operations should be conducted in ways that significantly increase the efficient use of energy, water and resources.
- j. State operations and purchases should reflect the efficient use and reuse of resources and reduction of contaminants released into the environment.

**State Community Development Sustainability Policies:** In supporting sustainable communities, state agencies shall seek to enable and encourage local communities to achieve the following objectives:

- a. Resilient local economies that provide a diversity of economic opportunities for all citizens.
- b. Workers supported by lifelong education to ensure a globally competitive workforce.
- c. An independent and productive citizenry.
- d. Youth supported by strong families and communities.
- e. Downtowns and main street communities that are active and vital.
- f. Development that wisely and efficiently uses infrastructure investments and natural resources.
- g. Affordable housing available for citizens in community centers.
- h. Healthy urban and rural watersheds, including habitats for fish and wildlife.
- i. Clean and sufficient water for all uses.
- j. Efficient use and reuse of resources and minimization of harmful emissions to the environment.

- k. Intensification of efforts to increase the economic stability of communities designated as economically distressed.



## Appendix B: Sustainability Assessment Matrix

Environment	Social/Community	Economy
Energy Efficiency	Civic Engagement	Business Retention and Development
Energy Production/Renewable Energy	Environmental Justice	Green Market Development
Greenhouse Gas Mitigation	Equity in Access and Services	Local Economies
Water Efficiency	Housing Supply and Affordability	Quality Jobs and Living Wages
Waste Minimization/Materials Management	Rural and Distressed Communities	Workforce Readiness
Land Use	Education	Life Cycle Costing
Green Infrastructure (e.g., stormwater)	Transportation Choices	Total Cost of Ownership
Biodiversity and Invasive Species	Agency Staff Support	
Water in the Environment: Quality, Hydrology	Climate Adaptation and Hazard Mitigation	
Working Lands	Food Access and Nutrition	
Ambient Noise and Light	Health Systems, Food Access and Nutrition	
Air Quality and Toxics	Good Governance	
	Vulnerable Populations (youth, elderly)	
	Historic Preservation	
	Arts and Culture	

## Appendix C: Climate Equity Blueprint Decision-making Questions

### Agency Checklist:

#### Applying the Climate Equity Blueprint to Decision-making

##### Guiding Questions: Build internal capacity

- Do our staff have access to intercultural competency workshops and trainings to stay informed to be able to make the best possible decisions on equity? How does our agency provide opportunities for staff to build and share their intercultural competency skills, facilitate continued learning within the agency, and develop recommendations for agency consideration?
- How do staff and leadership set goals to improve intercultural competency and how are they held accountable to those goals?
- Has the program and/or agency developed a measurement for DEI workforce competency?
- Are staff trained on the history of inequitable policies and exclusionary decision-making practices that have led to current inequities in Oregon?
- Does our agency have a designated EJ Coordinator or “Citizen Advocate” who regularly attends EJ Council meetings and has adequate FTE to serve as a liaison with agency programs and other State agencies to advance EJ-related work?
- Have we requested or set aside funding for internal capacity-building for staff? Is our program or process adequately funded to engage in ongoing learning and capacity building? If not, what are other available resources or next steps? What are new or existing opportunities for different agencies/departments to pool resources?

##### Guiding Questions: Embed equity and accountability into design

- Are diversity, equity, and inclusion explicitly included in our agency’s core values or guiding principles?
- Is intercultural competency included in position descriptions? Are requirements for intercultural competency included in positions that oversee or manage the work of others?
- Is the program or project aligned with the state’s strategic goal(s) to address equity and environmental justice? Is equity addressed in the plans or other documents guiding our work? Is climate equity specifically named?
- Does the program or policy address racial equity? If so, are there metrics developed to measure effectiveness and outcomes?
- Is the program or policy written in plain language or various accessible languages?
- Does the program or policy consider unintended consequences (e.g., displacement, gentrification, poor air quality, transportation barriers, lack of affordable housing, etc.) that may affect climate-vulnerable communities?
- Have we removed barriers (e.g., by providing technical assistance, made opportunities available in various languages, etc.) for community to either apply or participate in the

program?

- Does the program or policy have multi-benefit outcomes for climate-vulnerable communities? What mechanisms will be used to ensure benefits to climate-vulnerable communities? For example, does it:
  - Increase investments and resources.
  - Provide capacity-building, training, and workforce development opportunities.
  - Provide job opportunities and career pathways?
- Is a reporting framework in place that generates publicly available data on key metrics and benchmarks in a timely manner? Is there a communications plan to communicate progress to stakeholders regularly?
- Are benchmarks identified to measure progress on important outcomes to communities, policymakers, and equity stakeholders?

#### Guiding Questions: Lead meaningful community engagement

- Are communities engaged early in the process to ensure opportunity to incorporate their feedback into the project/program development and community engagement strategies?
- Have we been clear about what kinds of information we seek from specific communities we are hoping to engage with? Have we clearly defined communities' decision-making role and ensured that community representatives are included in decision-making throughout the process?
- Does our plan complement and/or is it informed by existing efforts already led by community-based organizations (CBOs)? Does our agency have established relationships with groups engaged on this topic?
- Have we made our engagement activities as accessible and as inclusive as possible for everyone? Have we considered offering technical assistance to new community partners who may not have engaged with us before?
- How can we acknowledge and address historical trauma of impacted communities through this process?
- Are we focusing on highlighting community assets as well as deficits? Where are there opportunities to support, amplify, or fund community-led efforts related to this project?
- Will this process help foster the building of effective, long-term relationships and trust between climate vulnerable communities and state agencies? Does our agency understand who is most climate vulnerable?
- How will the community know that their participation is contributing directly to the program or policy? Does our plan involve the community in implementation?
- Does the program or policy align with and support existing community priorities, creating an opportunity to leverage resources and build collaboration?
- How are we sharing power and creating opportunities for communities to lead? Has our agency shown flexibility and adaptive management through a willingness to pilot and expand beyond its historical ways of doing the work?

#### Guiding Questions: Improve data collection and use

- What process does our agency use to collect community information? Are community partners involved in determining data needs?
- What data have we collected for our policy or program? What do the data tell us about existing inequities or vulnerable communities in the areas affected by our policy or program? What data do we need to collect to measure our impact?

- How are we ensuring community members feel comfortable sharing demographic or qualitative information with us?
- Are there data gaps? What do community partners say is missing? What agency might host the data we are looking for? Have we explored opportunities to collaborate or learn with other state agencies?