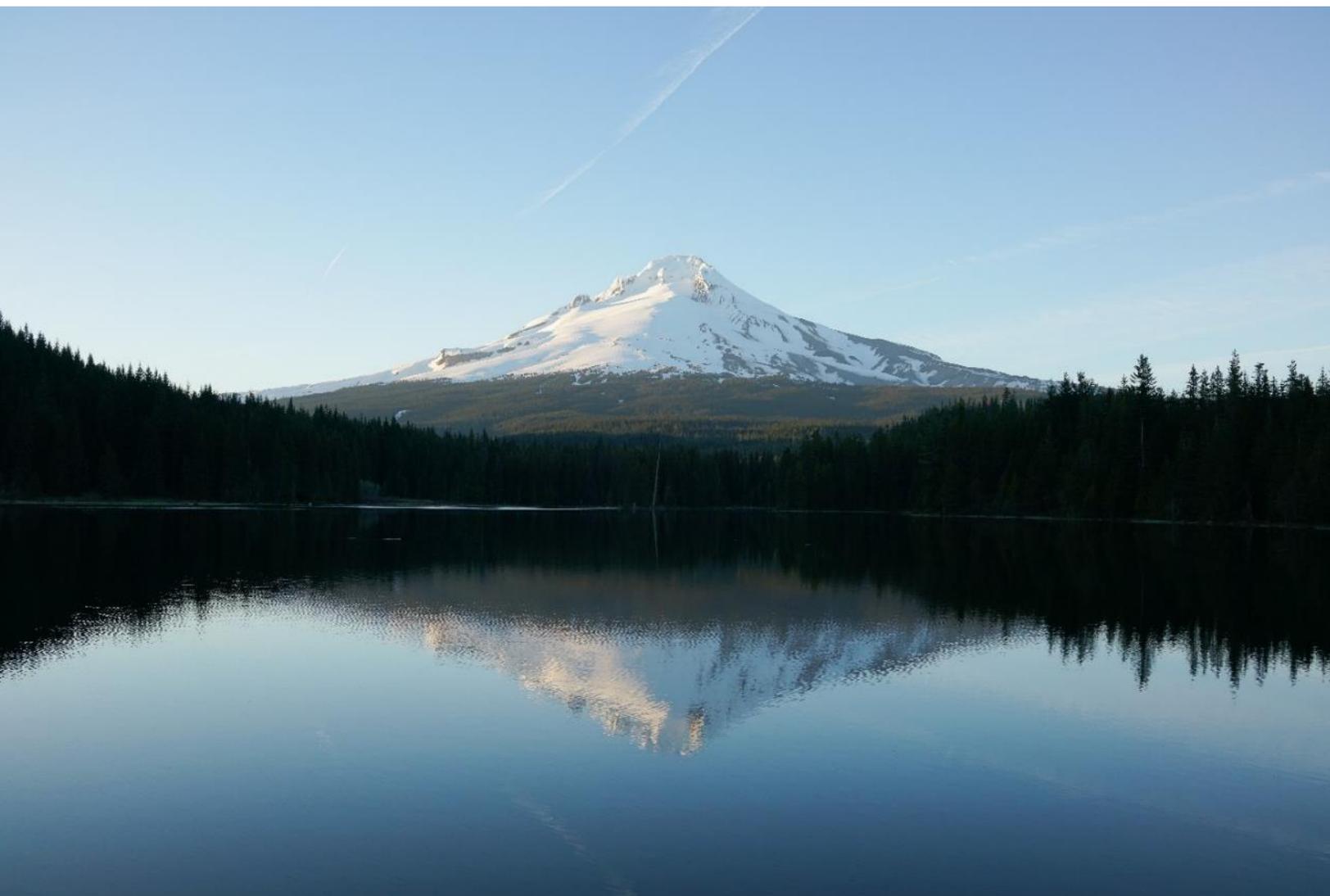




# Oregon Sustainability Board Sustainability Survey

## Phase 1 and 2 Results

October 2018



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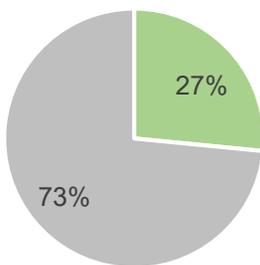
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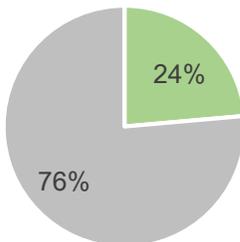
# Survey Outline and Objectives

## Phase 1 response rate



In 2017 the Oregon Sustainability Board embarked on a project to survey employees across state government regarding their knowledge, priorities and levels of support related to sustainability. This survey project entailed collaboration among the Board, the DAS Sustainability Program, the Governor’s Natural Resource Office and the Interagency Sustainability Coordinators Network. The results are intended to guide future initiatives and strengthen sustainability programs across the enterprise. The survey effort was launched in two phases, with Phase 1 directed at agency leadership, and Phase 2 at all other staff across state government.

## Phase 2 response rate



This report summarizes the results from Phase 1 and Phase 2 of the statewide sustainability survey. More specifically, the questions gauged prioritization, levels of awareness, willingness to participate, perceived benefits and impacts, current performance, barriers to success and opportunities for improvement.

In Phase 1, delivered in fall 2017, 1,126 surveys were distributed to agency leadership through the Governor’s office (leadership included staff with salary range 35 and above). This survey included high-level questions about leadership awareness, support, and barriers for sustainability efforts.

Phase 2 went out to 5,225 randomly selected staff (level 34 and below). Phase 2 contained similar question areas as phase 1 and was informed by phase 1 results. It also gauged whether the executive-level feedback from the results of Phase 1 was consistent with employee priorities, sentiment and current level of engagement.

■ Responded ■ No response

### Response Rate:

Phase 1- 299 responses out of 1,126 surveys (27% response rate) distributed to agency leadership. Summary results that include all responses have a 95% confidence level with a 5% margin of error.

Phase 2- 1,233 responses out of 5,225 surveys (24% response rate) sent to a random sample of 20 percent of staff enterprise-wide. Summary results have a 95% confidence level with a 2.75% margin of error.

Response rates for both surveys were significantly higher than the average response rate for statewide surveys managed by DAS (average 15%) which may indicate a high interest in sustainability efforts across the state.



# Strategic Prioritization

Across the enterprise staff and leadership believe sustainability should be a strategic priority. Currently, however, staff do not perceive it to be one.

Desired vs. perceived prioritization:

Agency leaders and staff agree sustainability should be a strategic priority for their agencies. About 91% of agency leadership and 93% of employees indicated sustainability should be a high or moderate strategic priority.

There is a gap among staff between desired and perceived prioritization. While 93% of staff believe sustainability should be a moderate or high priority, only 69% of staff think sustainability currently is a moderate or high priority. Breaking out their scores shows further disparity; 36% rated that they think it is a moderate priority and only 33% believe it is a high agency priority.

Awareness:

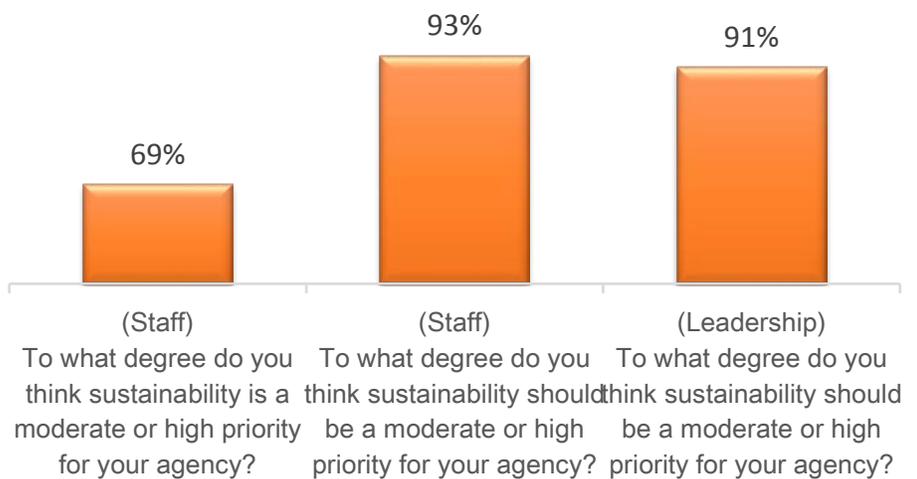
Less than half of staff indicated they were somewhat or very aware of their agencies sustainability efforts.

Some comments from staff indicated that awareness at the program level nearest to them was high but awareness at the division or agency level was low.

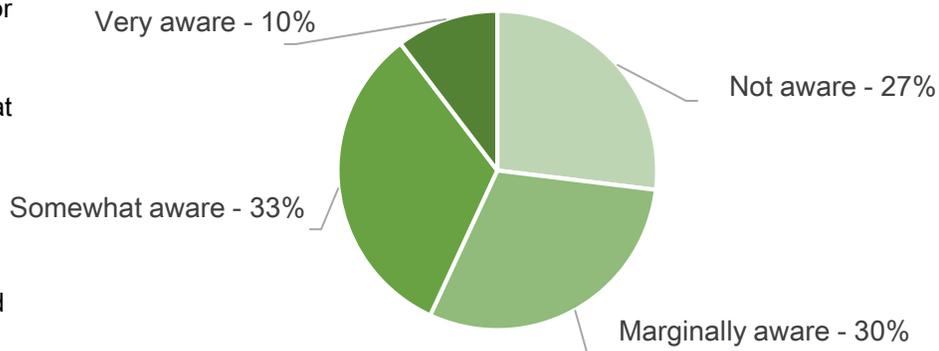
Interest:

Despite the relatively low awareness, 61% of staff said they were moderately or highly interested in participating in their agency's sustainability efforts.

## Staff and leadership prioritization



## Staff awareness of sustainability efforts





# Prioritizing Sustainability Topics and Activities

Leadership Priorities		Staff Priorities
1	Energy	Energy
2	Waste reduction / recycling	Protecting public health
3	Water	Waste reduction / recycling
4	Transportation	Water
5	Natural resources (land, plants, wildlife)	Procurement (goods and services)
6	Procurement (goods and services)	Toxics reduction
7	Climate change	Natural resources (land, plants, wildlife)
8	Equity / diversity <sup>1</sup>	Transportation
9	Toxics reduction	Climate change

## Staff and leadership prioritization:

The summary results of both Phase 1 and Phase 2 surveys shows that leadership and staff shared similar sustainability priorities. Energy, water, and waste reduction were all ranked highest by both staff and leadership. Notable, however, is that staff also rated public health as a high priority. Climate change fell as a low priority for both leadership and staff.

## Benefits:

Staff and leadership also agreed on how the agency would benefit from sustainability efforts.

While ordered differently for staff and leadership, the top four ranked benefits/impacts of more focused efforts on sustainability include:

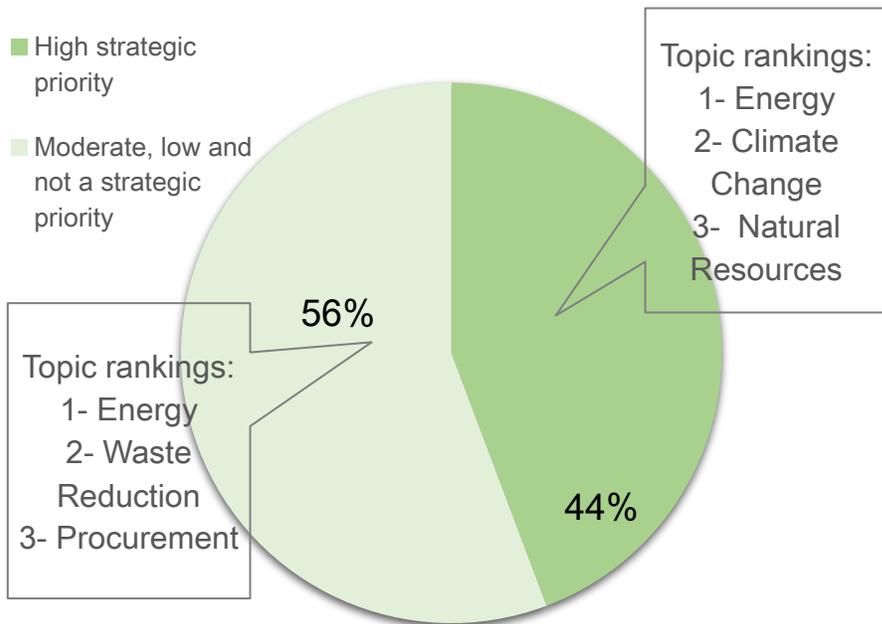
- Preparing and adapting for the future
- Increasing efficiency in the use of resources
- Fulfilling a sense of obligation (the right thing to do)
- Saving money

<sup>1</sup> Only the leadership survey included equity/diversity as an option. This was omitted from the staff survey.



# Prioritizing Sustainability Topics and Activities

## Leadership rating: strategic prioritization and high ranking topics



Prioritization (continued): There is a difference in topic prioritization between the leaders who rate sustainability as a whole a high priority vs. those rating it as a less important strategic priority.

About 45% of leaders rated sustainability as a high agency priority. This group indicated that energy, climate change, and natural resources are the three most important topics on which to focus.

The 56% of leaders who rated sustainability as a moderate, low, or not a priority ranked energy, waste reduction and procurement as the top three areas on which to focus; in this group, climate change was ranked much lower (8th out of the 9 topic areas).

### Activities:

Regarding more discrete actions, leadership prioritized the following activities:

1. Managing building resource use (energy, water and waste)
2. Integrating sustainability into agency programs / decisions
3. Providing employee education and training

Updating agency sustainability plans and focusing more on procuring sustainable goods and services also received high rankings compared to other activities.

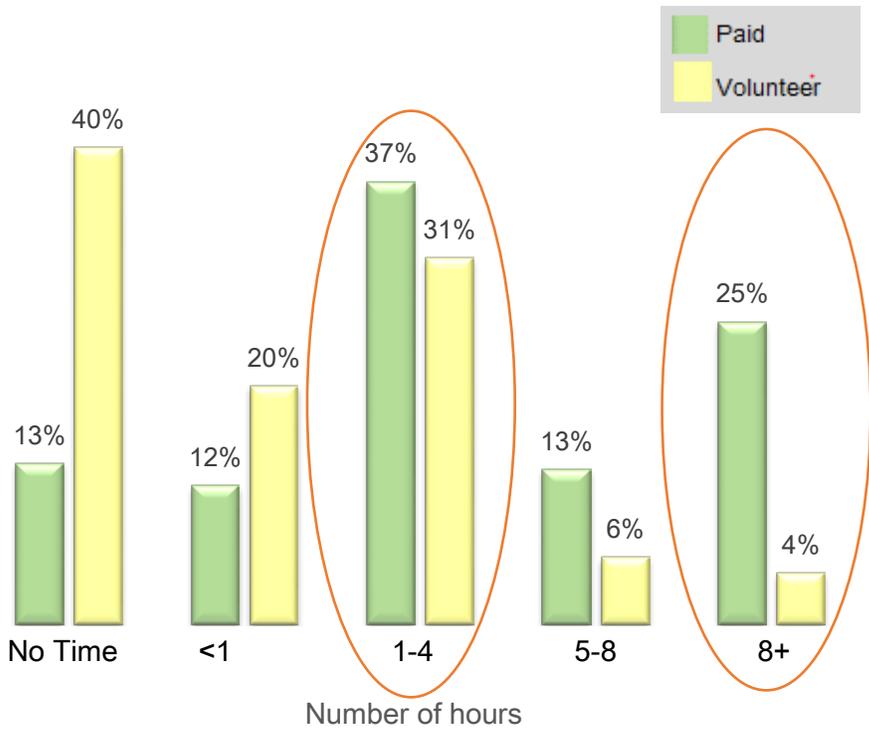
Comments from staff showed high interest in telework and alternative work schedules. Suggested benefits include: reducing traffic, reducing greenhouse emissions and saving energy in buildings.





# Staff Involvement

Staff rating: paid vs. volunteer hours they are willing to commit to sustainability activities



Participation:

The survey asked leadership and staff about their willingness to participate in agency sustainability activities. The questions asked leadership which topic areas would benefit most from staff time and where they are most willing to support volunteer or paid staff time.

Leadership indicated staffing constraints limit the total time possible to designate for these efforts. Comments indicated that having a budget for staff to work explicitly on sustainability initiatives would affect significantly more change.

Employee willingness to use paid vs. volunteer time shows that there would be significantly more support if able to use paid time. In the middle range of 1-4 hours, employees are near equally willing to offer volunteer or paid time. Anything above 4 hours and paid time appears a necessity. This is contrasted with leadership prioritization.

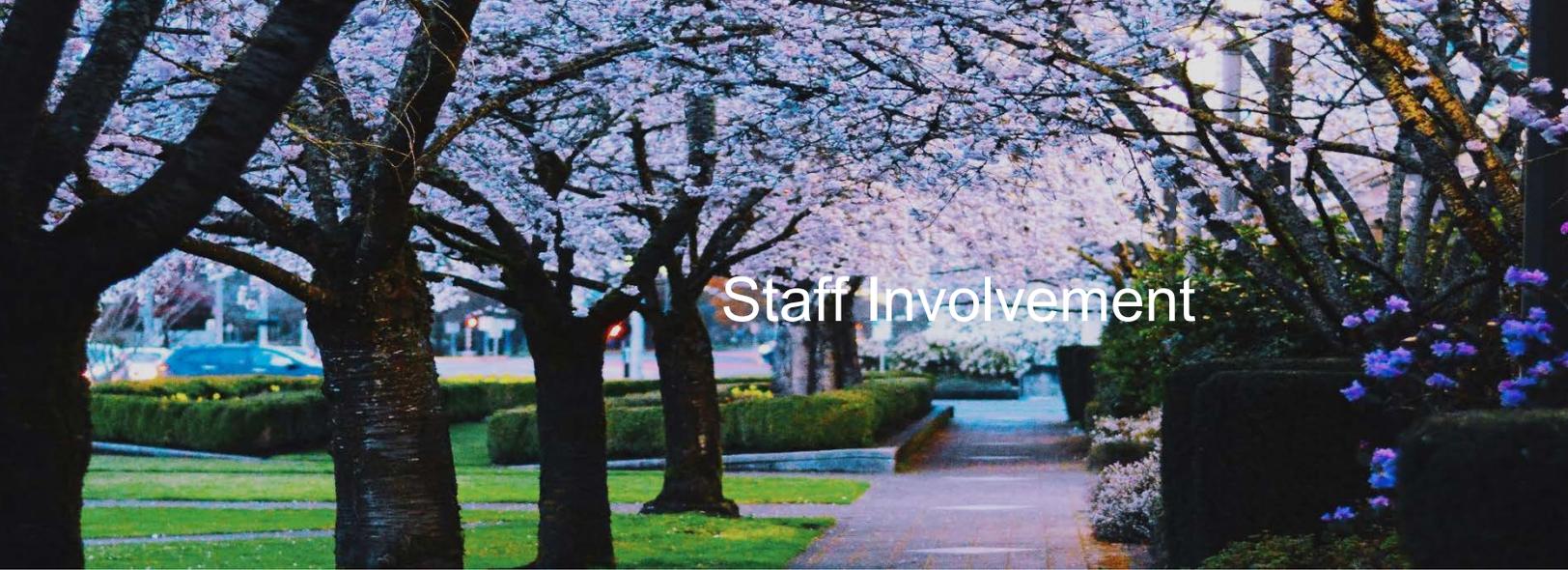
There was marginal support for allotting 5+ hours a month to sustainability activities (paid or volunteer). The comments from both staff and leadership indicated a strain on existing workloads. The following section describes the areas leadership indicated would benefit most from staff involvement.

Motivators:

When asked what would motivate staff to participate more in agency sustainability efforts they indicated the following as the top three motivators:

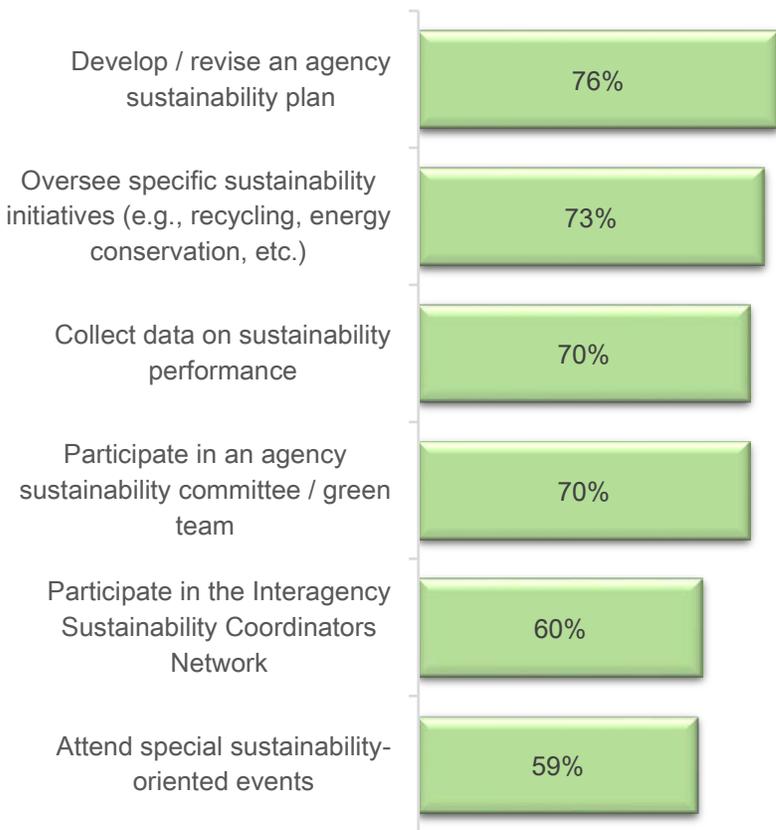
1. Ability to use paid staff time to participate
2. Direction from agency leadership
3. More knowledge and training on sustainability opportunities





# Staff Involvement

## Leadership rating: support of paid staff time



% of Strongly support and somewhat support

### Activities:

Ratings from staff and leadership were taken into account regarding interest, benefit, total amount of time staff are willing to volunteer, and total amount of time leadership can commit.

As a result the following areas would likely benefit most from staff involvement:

- Developing / revising an agency sustainability plan
- Overseeing specific sustainability initiatives (e.g. recycling, energy conservation)
- Participating in agency sustainability committees / green teams

With respect to revamping or developing agency sustainability plans, leadership indicated they would approve 8+ hours of staff time a month. Once the plan is developed/updated, a mix of volunteer / paid time at approximately four hours a month would be supported to sustain continued activities.



# Agency Performance

## Current Performance:

Leadership was asked to rate their agency's current performance across a range of categories. Equity/diversity and recycling were rated as the top categories for performance among all agencies, but responses varied when looking at agencies by size. There were 11 categories that leadership rated. The following are those that received the highest ratings, broken out by agency size.

1 = Highest 11 = Lowest

## Top two performing categories:

### All agencies

- 1 - Promoting equity/diversity
- 2 - Increasing recycling

### Medium agencies (100-700 employees)

- 1 - Increasing recycling
- 2 - Reducing toxics

### Large agencies (>700 employees)

- 1 - Promoting equity/diversity
- 2 - Increasing recycling

### Small agencies (<100 employees)

- 1 - Promoting equity/diversity
- 2 - Managing natural resources

Leadership indicated efforts in promoting equity/diversity are currently performing well. The narrative comments from staff expressed both questions and insights concerning this topic.

For example, there were questions about sufficiently defining this topic area. It is currently either unclear or too broad a definition to identify strategies and measurable goals around equity and diversity efforts. Some comments identified a need to either develop or sustain a community/culture of sustainability at the agency level.



# Agency Performance

Current Performance (continued):

Of the 11 categories that leadership rated, the following are those that receive the lowest ratings broken out by agency size.

1 = Highest 11 = Lowest

Lowest performing categories:

All agencies

- 8 - Reducing fossil fuel use from the agency fleet
- 9 - Reducing greenhouse gas emissions
- 10 - Increasing resiliency to climate change
- 11 - Conserving water

Medium agencies (100-700 employees)

- 8 - Increasing resiliency to climate change
- 9 - Reducing fossil fuel use form agency fleet
- 10 - Procuring of goods and services
- 11 - Conserving water

Large agencies (>700 employees)

- 8 - Increasing resiliency to climate change
- 9 - Reducing greenhouse gas emissions
- 10 - Reducing fossil fuel use form agency fleet
- 11 - Conserving water

Small agencies (<100 employees)

- 8 - Conserving water
- 9 - Reducing fossil fuel use from agency fleet
- 10 - Procuring of goods and services
- 11 - Increasing resiliency to climate change





# Current Barriers

## Staff rating: significant barriers to practicing sustainability



## Current barriers:

Staff identified current barriers to sustainability performance: high short-term costs (budget) and lack of perceived guidance or support from leadership.

Barriers remain mostly the same across agencies of all sizes. One exception is that large agencies also ranked knowledge and training as a significant barrier.

## Comments:

Staff comments echoed the quantitative results and shed light on how these areas affect sustainability activities within the agencies. Lack of guidance and support from leadership leave staff feeling a disconnect between staff actions and the agency vision. For some larger agencies, staff expressed a willingness to participate and integrate sustainable practices but noted that the culture of sustainability is not established. Staff commented that a vision, consistent communication, and clear and attainable goals would help address this.



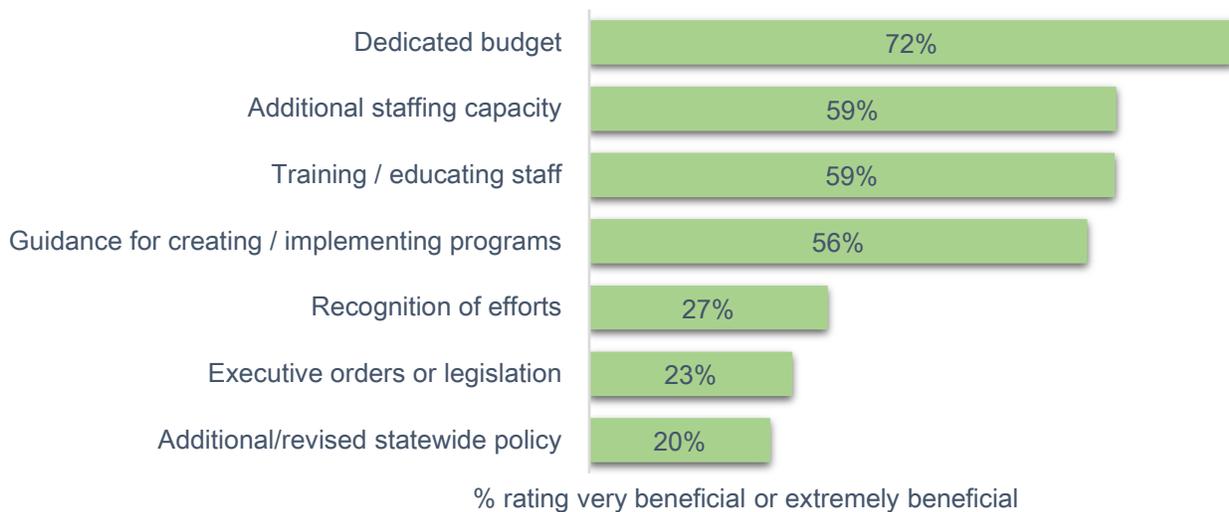


# Opportunities for Support

Opportunities for support:

When asked what areas would benefit most from additional support, leaderships' ratings mirrored the barriers identified by staff.

Leadership rating: areas for additional support



Communication:

Staff indicated that the most effective ways to learn about sustainability efforts are through the following outlets:

- State government sustainability-specific newsletter
- Staff meetings
- Trainings
- Agency green teams





# Conclusions and Recommendations

Survey results indicate both positive trends in the form of strong support for sustainability among leadership and staff – but also some significant opportunities to further agency sustainability efforts. Some specific conclusions and recommendations:

- Staff are interested in more knowledge about what their agencies are doing with respect to sustainability. Agency sustainability coordinators are encouraged to partner with their communications staff to increase messaging and disseminate sustainability news and progress. The DAS Sustainability Program can help provide content for agencies to push to staff, as well as communication tips and ideas.
- With the convening of a Governor's Climate Cabinet and state Carbon Policy Office, the timing is right to close current climate literacy gaps among leadership and staff across the enterprise. Leaders from natural resources agencies, who already perceive climate change and sustainability as high priorities, can help in this effort. Given climate change is a priority of the Governor, the Board recommends additional messaging, training and knowledge development on the impacts of climate change to agency operations, and the importance of both mitigation and resilience.
- Leaders and staff were well aligned in perceived benefits of sustainability. Preparing and adapting for the future – a key tenet in climate change adaptation – was seen as the greatest benefit. The Board recommends that this theme be integrated into agency climate change knowledge development and training efforts, as well as overall adaptive resiliency of agencies.
- Leaders indicate that their agencies are addressing equity/inclusion. While this topic represents a social dimension of sustainability, respondents acknowledged that it is broad and not as commonly affiliated with sustainability compared to environmental sustainability topics. The Board suggests further effort would be beneficial to both define and measure these aspects of sustainability.
- Leadership responses point to an opportunity to further support agency work in the areas of climate change and fleet. Agencies are starting to integrate climate change into their sustainability plans, and to track metrics such as greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. It is recommended that the Sustainability Board and the Global Warming Commission work collaboratively to assist agencies in these efforts. DAS Fleet and Parking Services already calculates GHG emissions associated with state fleet vehicles – this data provides a good foundation for such efforts.



- Staff are willing to participate in agency sustainability efforts – small amounts as volunteers, substantially more time if paid. Leaders support allowing staff paid time to participate in sustainability efforts – up to four hours per month, but up to 8 hours for developing initial sustainability plans. This suggests the chance for agencies to provide more specific guidance to staff on when or how they can participate on paid time. The Board recommends that agencies support staff paid time during normal work hours, and that this is communicated through human resources policies or other similar mechanisms.
- The Board recommends that agency leadership/executive teams explicitly support sustainability efforts. This could include integrating sustainability into agency strategic plans, messaging from leadership to staff in agency communications (e.g. internal newsletters), developing an agency sustainability policy and having leadership actively engaged in sustainability plans (development and presentations to the Board).
- While staffing and budgeting are perceived as limitations, sustainability efforts often lead to cost savings and efficiencies. The Board recommends agencies apply life-cycle analysis to evaluate both up-front and long-term costs and savings, and explore capturing and re-investing savings from sustainability into new sustainability efforts. Specific support for agency sustainability efforts can be integrated into existing position descriptions, noting that sustainability doesn't need to be an "add on" effort, but rather can be reflected as helping existing staff integrate sustainability principles into their work.
- Beyond managing buildings efficiently, leaders expressed integrating sustainability into agency program/decisions as a high priority, along with staff education and training. The Board can support development of decision support tools and guidance to help agencies with programmatic sustainability efforts.

