# STOUGHTON, WI AREA

***2022 Sustainability Plan***

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# INTRODUCTION

## Committee

The Stoughton Area Sustainability Committee is made up of the mayor, two alderpersons, and nine community members. The current committee members are: Mayor Tim Swadley, Alderperson Rachel Venegas (Chair), Donelle Scaffidi (Vice Chair), Alderperson Ben Heili, John Hallinan, Stephan Jackson, Yvonne Meichtry, Denise Duranczyk, Brady Troeller, Scott Taylor, and Jeffrey Leverich. The committee meets monthly and started in September 2021.

## Definitions

Sustainability is defined commonly as, "meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs (source: Brundtland Report, 1987)." Sustainability is referred to as a whole *systems* approach addressing the environment, social equity, and the economy, which are also known as the three "E's" or the "triple bottom line." Sustainability emphasizes the importance of balancing all three considerations in every decision-making process. This plan embraces the following sustainability principles:

1. Reduce dependence on fossil fuels and extracted underground metals and minerals.
2. Reduce dependence on chemicals and other manufactured substances that can accumulate in nature.
3. Reduce dependence on activities that harm life-sustaining ecosystems.
4. Reduce barriers to achieving present and future human needs equitably and efficiently."

(Source: McFarland Strategic Plan 2020-2030)

The City of Stoughton strives to create a sustainable future by balancing economic resilience and growth, environmental protection, and social equity to meet the needs of the City in the present without compromising the resources available for future generations. Stoughton seeks a culture of sustainable use of resources within the community in which its government, residents, businesses and organizations will all be involved in informed, conscious and strategic decisions and actions leading to a sustainable future.

The definition of equity is: _____.

## Scope

For the purposes of this Plan currently, "City of Stoughton" or "City" refers to all citizens of Stoughton, businesses, and the municipality of Stoughton. Further input on scope will be gathered in future community visioning sessions and a survey.

## Organization of the Plan

This Plan is organized into the following six focus areas.

| Focus area | Member(s) currently assigned to focus area (for reference only) |
|---|---|
| 1. Energy Usage | Steve, Brady |
| 2. Transportation | Steve, Brady |
| 3. Water Quality and Use | Scott, Donelle, Yvonne |
| 4. Solid waste management | Steve, Rachel |
| 5. Land Use, Development, and Buildings | Scott, Denise, Ben |
| 6. Community: Engagement, Education, and Health | Yvonne, Donelle, Ben |

Within each focus area, the following will be identified:

- **Goals** will be as specific as needed and create the direction and need for action.
- **Actions** will be taken to achieve the goals. Actions will be defined as short-term or long-term and be specific as needed to determine whether an action has been completed.
- **Indicators** are baselines and targets to be able to measure progress toward goals and actions in each focus area. Where possible, these indicators will be measurable. Indicators will be used as needed and not required, so as not to delay actions that will serve the community but may not be specifically measured.

# PLANNING PROCESS

On X date, the Stoughton City Council adopted resolution X to form a sustainability committee. Beginning in September of 2021, the committee started working together on this Sustainability Plan. Other area plans including Monona, Middleton, McFarland, Sun Prairie, and Dane County were consulted. The committee reached out to people who worked on those plans for lessons learned.

Starting in September 2021, the Sustainability committee met monthly to listen to speakers from throughout the community on current sustainability practices within and around Stoughton. Based on this knowledge and research into other communities' plans, the committee started to draft a Sustainability Plan.

**Next steps:**

In the March 2022 meeting, the committee plans to discuss options for consulting help (to then be able to draft a resolution and budget request). The consulting help will be used to create the community visioning survey. The committee will also start to plan the details of the community input/visioning sessions.

# LESSONS LEARNED FROM OTHER COMMUNITIES

Various members of the Stoughton Sustainability Committee reached out to other local sustainability committees who have gone through the process of creating a sustainability plan to gain knowledge and lessons learned. The main lessons learned gathered from other local communities were:

- Start small with the plan to be able to get started taking actions. You can always add to it later. Make it realistic.
- Include timelines in the plan.
- Get community input using a survey and/or community input sessions.
- Consult with a company for the creation of the survey.
- If possible, hire a sustainability coordinator, to help with managing the plan and to remove burden from city employees.

The communities consulted were Monona, Sun Prairie, Middleton, and Dane County.

# COMMUNITY INPUT

After talking with nearby communities about their lessons learned, it was determined that a survey and community visioning sessions will be used to gather direction and feedback on the plan.

We aim to have the community visioning sessions scheduled by the end of May (to take place in June/July/August). We aim to have 3 sessions. Sessions will likely be remote for ease of scheduling. Our goal is to receive feedback on the drafted Sustainability Plan scope and main areas of focus, as well as gather ideas for what the community wants to see as sustainability practices in Stoughton.

We aim to start the survey questions in our April meeting, working with a consultant, and send out the survey in the fall. The survey will focus also focus on scope and main areas of focus of the Plan, as well as gather ideas for what the community wants to see as sustainability practices in Stoughton.

# PLAN DETAILS BY AREA OF FOCUS

1. Energy usage

**(SU stands for Stoughton Utilities)**

**Goals:**

- **Promote change to renewable energy in Stoughton**

**Actions to support goals:**

| Time | Action | Cost | Responsible person or group | Status | Indicator |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Short-term | Review Stoughton Utilities' statistics and goals. Document how | 0 | Assign sustainability committee members | | |

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|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **(By Dec 2022)** | **the Sustainability committee can help achieve/promote those goals.** | | | | |
| **Short-term (July 2022)** | **Promote the "go green" option provided by Stoughton Utilities and WPPI by partnering with SU creating yard signs.** | **Confirm budget with SU** | **Assign sustainability committee members** | | |
| **Short-term** | **Educate the community by promoting Stoughton Utilities sustainability presentation(s) by Jill Weiss to the community via City Facebook and website** | **0** | **Assign sustainability committee members** | | |
| **Short-term** | **Create a Stoughton Sustainability Committee Facebook page** | **0** | **Assign sustainability committee members** | | |
| **Short-term** | **Create a Stoughton Sustainability Committee website (a page on the City of Stoughton website)** | **0** | **Assign sustainability committee members** | | |
| **Mid-term** | **Define ways to support SU's goal of being carbon neutral by 2050.** | | | | |
| **Long-term** | **Increase the use of renewable energy in the city by %** | | | | |

## 2. Transportation

**Goals:**

- **Promote cleaner transportation options within Stoughton**

| Time | Action | Cost | Responsible person or group | Status | Indicator |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Short-term | Research "success" stories within Stoughton and share with the community | 0 | | | |
| Short-term | Create a subcommittee or task force on transportation | | | | |
| Mid-term | Evaluate cost of changing city vehicles to electric. | | | | |
| Mid-term | Evaluate cost of adding electric charging stations. | | | | |

3. Water quality and use

**Goals:**

- **Promote a cleaner environment and conserve water use within Stoughton**

| Time | Action | Cost | Responsible person or group | Status | Indicator |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Short-term | Research "success" stories within Stoughton and share with the community, for example Lynn Diebel's work for Badfish creek. | 0 | | | |

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Short-term** | **Review Stoughton Utilities' statistics and goals related to water. Document how the Sustainability committee can help achieve/promote those goals.** | | | | |
| **Mid-term** | **Schedule speakers who are doing work on water quality improvement in Stoughton.** | | | | |
| **Mid-term** | | | | | |

**4. Solid waste management**

**Goals:**

- **Educate the community on how solid waste is managed.**
- **Promote ways to decrease food waste.**
- **Increase community access to composting.**

| Time | Action | Cost | Responsible person or group | Status | Indicator |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Short-term** | **Promote Public Works' sustainability presentation and recommended actions and resources.** | | | | |
| **Short-term** | **Promote education of composting to the community.** | | | | |

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|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Short-term** | **Evaluate creating a public composting option.** | | | | |
| **Mid-term** | **Decrease municipal solid waste collected by X%** | | | | |
| **Long-term** | **Decrease solid waste collected per household by X%** | | | | |

## 5. Land use, Development, and Buildings

**Goals:**

- **Research and evaluate Stoughton's land use (unused buildings, population density)**
- **Measure amount of LEED-certified buildings in Stoughton**
- **Promote LEED practices and education**
- **Promote regenerative agriculture concept**
- **Recommend practices to other committees to manage land more sustainably**
- **Increase protected land**

| Time | Action | Cost | Responsible person or group | Status | Indicator |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Short-term** | **Research and recommend practices to other committees to increase density per square acre** | | | | |
| **Short-term** | **Evaluate Stoughton's wetlands and ways to promote and increase their protection.** | | | | |
| **Short-term** | **Promote and educate the community about** | | | | |

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | **native plant use and resources.** | | | | |
| **Mid-term** | **Provide incentives for native plant use vs. lawns/grass.** | | | | |
| **Mid-term** | **Provide incentives for managing land and buildings more sustainably/efficiently** | | | | |
| **Mid-term** | **Align goals with Public Works on tree management.** | | | | |
| **Mid-term** | **Gather "success stories" and share with community.** | | | | |
| **Long-term** | **Provide incentives for sustainable building practices.** | | | | |
| **Long-term** | **Increase Stoughton's protected land by X%.** | | | | |
| **Long-term** | **Find ways to incentivize more sustainable construction and land use practices. Set more measurable goals.** | | | | |

## 6. Community Engagement, Education, & Health

**Goals:**

- **Complete a community survey and visioning sessions on Sustainability**
- **Recognize good sustainability practices within the community**
- **Educate the community on Sustainability topics**

| Time | Action | Cost | Responsible person or group | Status | Indicator |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Short-term | Complete a community survey on Sustainability. | | | | |
| Short-term | Complete community visioning/input sessions on Sustainability. | | | | |
| Short-term | Recognize citizens/city departments/businesses for sustainable practices. | | | | |
| Short-term | Create a Sustainability page on Stoughton's website. | | | | |
| Short-term | Promote No-Mow May | | | | |
| Mid-term | Create a Sustainability dashboard on Stoughton's website. | | | | |
| Mid-term | Provide education on Sustainability topics to the community and especially to children. | | | | |
| Mid-term | Evaluate city policies and practices from a community health perspective and recommend new practices to other committees. | | | | |
| Mid-term | Help promote awareness of Stoughton's current sustainable practices | | | | |

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| | **(such as farmer's market, gardening, etc.).** | | | | |
| **Mid-term** | **Work with library to see if a "tool library" could be created. (People using each other's tools)** | | | | |
| **Long-term** | **Increase awareness of sustainable practices through education. Find ways to continue to engage the community on a regular basis on goal-setting.** | | | | |
| **Long-term** | **Engage with school district and help set goals.** | | | | |