

May 22nd, 2023, City of Stoughton Sustainability Committee Meeting Notes

Committee members present: Rachel Venegas, Scott Taylor, Denise Duranczyk, Adrienne Nienow, Katelyn Geleynse, Heath Massey, Ben Heili, Donelle Scaffidi, Mayor Tim Swadley (ex officio)

Non-committee members present: None

Call to Order: 6:04 PM

Ben moves to approve May 15th meeting minutes, Scott seconds.

Equity Awareness:

No update from DEI committee, according to Katelyn.

Communications:

Jen has decided to resign from committee. Jeff did not respond when contacted so his status on the committee is unknown.

Denise mentions that sustainability coordinator was discussed in past meeting, according to meeting notes, but this was not noticed in agenda. She indicated that it should be noticed if we are going to discuss it. Others point out that no action was taken on this question, implying that it may not have been necessary to notice this discussion.

Elect Chair & Vice Chair:

Donelle is elected new committee chair (Rachel nominates, Ben seconds). Adrienne (Donelle nominates, Scott seconds) is elected new committee vice chair.

Review Plan Sections Drafts:

We will plan to complete 2nd draft by 6/20/23 - for meeting on 6/26/23. Denise has already made detailed comments on each section. Committee needs to review and discuss every section of plan before completing our 2nd draft.

We agree that plan goals are still open to revision.

We discuss Transportation section as far as Goal 3. We plan to continue discussing draft sections at our next meeting on June 12th.

7:37 PM Donelle moves to adjourn, Ben seconds.

Water

Introduction - Brief (2 paragraphs) general background information (the issues*, how our actions can help address them)

**Be sure to include linked citations*

Vision (copied from [community dialogue handout](#))

The City of Stoughton, including residents and businesses, conserve, protect, restore, and advocate* for groundwater and surface water resources, ensuring clean water is available for drinking, recreation, fishing, and the support of healthy aquatic habitat.

Goals (copied from [community dialogue handout](#))

Goal 1. Conserve groundwater by increasing water use efficiency and taking actions that decrease the wasteful use of water.

{Objective}/Indicator	Baseline	Target
Municipal Gallons of Groundwater Used		Decrease by 20% by 2030
Public Safety Building (Gallons/year/sq. ft.)		
Public Library (Gallons/year/sq. ft.)		
Etc.		
Residential Gallons of Groundwater Pumped (Delivered?) per Capita per Year		Decrease by 20% by 2030
Commercial/Industrial Gallons of Groundwater Pumped (Delivered?) per Capita per Year		Decrease by 10% by 2030
Percentage of Groundwater Lost per Year		Decrease or maintain

Wastewater Discharge per Capital per Year		Decrease by 20% by 2030
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Actions (see Appendix A for detailed implementation considerations)

- Identify ways to utilize wastewater & rainwater collection for irrigation of city-owned (does the city irrigate?) & private landscapes
- Evaluate benefits & feasibility of having Stoughton Utilities join EPA WaterSense program
- Evaluate water use of municipal buildings & install more water saving fixtures as needed
- Evaluate water loss in water distribution system & develop control program
- Provide homeowners guidance for conserving water in landscape irrigation
- Provide homeowners guidance for evaluating their water use & installing water saving fixtures & replacing water softeners
- Review water rate structure & remove incentives to use large amounts of water

Goal 2. Protect groundwater from potential contaminants.

{Objective}/Indicator	Baseline	Target
Number of Potential Groundwater Contamination Sources Investigated		Increase
Number of Groundwater Contamination Mitigation Strategies Initiated		Increase

Actions (see Appendix A for detailed implementation considerations)

- Educate public about the source of its drinking water & threats to its purity
- Explore ways to reduce use of road salt without compromising public safety
- Review use of herbicides on city-owned lands that have potential to contaminate groundwater

- Investigate all potential sources of groundwater contamination, especially old & current industrial sites & superfund sites.
- Assess need for well head protection area mapping & planning
- Evaluate the need for testing city water for contaminants and listing levels of contaminants in an annual water quality report
- Monitor new developments and redevelopments to ensure they do not degrade our groundwater

Goal 3. Protect local waters by managing surface runoff quantity and quality.

{Objective}/Indicator	Baseline	Target
Pounds of Phosphorus in Stormwater at Outfalls		Decrease by 10%
Pounds of Total Suspended Solids in Stormwater at Outfalls		Decrease by 10%
Gallons of Stormwater at Outfalls		Decrease by 10%
Percentage of Stormwater Basins & Vegetated Conveyances supporting Un-mowed Native Vegetation		25%
Number of Newly Constructed Rain Gardens serving Large Rooftops on Commercial, Industrial, or Institutional Sites		5

Actions (see Appendix A for detailed implementation considerations)

- Adopt rain barrel use where feasible on city properties.
- Encourage use of rain barrels & rain gardens among homeowners.
- Encourage use of rain gardens to infiltrate rooftop runoff from large buildings on commercial, industrial & institutional sites.
- Where possible, incorporate infiltration areas, like rain gardens, bioswales & pervious pavement, into reconstructed streets, terraces, parking lots and other public areas.
- Provide property owners with guidance for landscaping methods that reduce runoff & decrease contamination of runoff.
- Strive to further improve construction site runoff management & erosion control.

- Seek ways to decrease impervious surfaces & increase pervious surfaces, including pervious pavement & infiltration areas, in new developments & redevelopments.
- Where possible convert stormwater management areas that currently support mowed turf, e.g., stormwater basin side-slopes & swales, to native vegetation.
- Investigate ways to reduce total suspended solids & phosphorus in city stormwater below the levels required by state regulations, particularly by improving street sweeping & leaf collection.
- Work with Dane County to implement “adaptive management” practices (through NR 217 & 216 permits) to reduce phosphorus following standards in the Rock River TMDL
- Further reduce phosphorus from Stoughton Utilities’ effluent
- Further reduce other contaminants (which ones? Are there economically feasible ways to improve our treatment of wastewater?) from Stoughton Utilities’ effluent
- Encourage participation in volunteer water quality monitoring in local waterways by Stoughton residents

Goal 4. Manage riparian land use to protect surface water quality and enhance aquatic habitat.

{Objective}/Indicator	Baseline	Target
Percentage of Shorelines Buffered by at least 35-foot-wide Strips of Un-mowed Natural Vegetation		Increase
Lineal Feet of Turf or Cropland Shoreline Buffer Zones Converted to Native Vegetation		Increase

Actions (see Appendix A for detailed implementation considerations)

- Map riparian zones & assess current condition of shoreline buffer zones (35 feet from shorelines) in the city and its extraterritorial jurisdiction zone.
- Halt mowing (accounting for shoreline access & infrastructure maintenance needs) &, if feasible, establish native vegetation on city-owned buffer zones.
- Conduct outreach to private landowners to encourage improved shoreline buffer zone management, e.g., reduced mowing and establishment of native vegetation.
- Encourage or require protection or establishment of native vegetation in shoreline buffer zones of new developments and redevelopments.

Near-term Actions

Mid-term Actions

Long-term Actions

For Appendix A:

KEY (from McFarland Plan)

- Responsible Committee or Commission* **CW** Committee of the Whole
- FC** Finance Committee
- PC** Plan Commission
- PK** Parks Committee
- PS** Public Safety Committee

PU Public Utilities

PW Public Works Committee

n/a Can be done at staff level without committee or commission involvement.

Priority Rankings

Near-Term = First Priority - Begin in 1-2 years

Mid-Term = Second Priority - Begin in 2-4 years

Long-Term = Third Priority - Begin in 4+ years

(FA) Actions	Impact	Cost	Staff Effort	Duration	Status	Responsible department	Responsible Committee/ Commission
Temporary reference row:	Low	\$	Low	3-6 mos,	Not Begun	Administration ??	https://www.cityofstoughton.com/boards-committees-commissions
	Medium	\$\$	Medium	6 mos - 1 yr,	In Progress	City Clerk Finance & Accounting Human Resource Parks & Recreation Planning & Development Police Public Library Public Works Senior Center Utilities WSTO TV (not listed above: Assessor, EMS, Fire, Municipal Court, Opera House)	
	High	\$\$\$	High	1 - 3 years, 3+ yrs, Recurring, Ongoing			

Solid Waste



“Landfills are the third-largest source of human-related methane emissions in the United States, accounting for approximately 15% of these emissions in 2021. Methane is a potent greenhouse gas at least 28 times more effective than CO₂ at trapping heat in the atmosphere over a 100-year period. The methane emissions from landfills in 2021 were approximately equivalent to the greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions from 23 million gasoline-powered passenger vehicles driven for one year or the CO₂ emissions from 13 million homes’ energy use for one year.”¹

** Look into the possibility of including a stat from John’s/ other source about the percentage of recycling waste that is actually recycled. Maybe a stat on the energy demand of recycling, advocating for an emphasis on Reduce and Reuse, Recycling as a last resort.*

1 - <https://www.epa.gov/lmop/basic-information-about-landfill-gas>

VISION STATEMENT

The City of Stoughton supports the 3 R’s - reduce, reuse, and recycle, in that order. The city will reduce the amount of waste sent to the landfill, while decreasing the amount of waste generated overall, and ensure that all waste is disposed of properly.

Goals

1. Reduce wasteful consumption and overall quantity of waste generated.
2. Reduce the use of toxic products and materials that have negative impacts on environmental and human health.
3. Support the use of quality products that retain their value, usefulness and function so they can be reused and repaired.
4. Ensure systems are in place to dispose of all waste properly, including hazardous waste, recyclable materials, and compostable items.

Objectives	Baseline	Target
Reduce Total Solid Waste Generated, Including Recycling (tons/yr)	?? tons/yr	?? (McF - decrease by 10% by 2030 (8 years))

Increase Percentage of Solid Waste Recycled by Weight	?? %	?? (McF - increase to 45% by 2030 (15% increase in 8 years)
Increase Number of Households Participating in Annual Clean Sweep Event	none	??
Increase percentage of materials from construction and deconstruction diverted from landfills	none	??
<i>Metric for bulk pick-ups? Not sure if John's includes this as part of total weight (tons/yr)</i>		
<i>Metric for residents utilizing the UPS drop-off for packing materials?</i>		

<https://landfill.countyofdane.com/services/clean-sweep>

Solid Waste Actions (see Appendix A for detailed implementation considerations)

Near-term Actions
Establish an Annual Clean Sweep event - with either Dane County Clean Sweep Program or Veolia
Create a municipal purchasing policy that requires consideration be given to whether a product is made from renewable and/or recycled materials.
Utilize social media and other forms of communication to regularly inform residents about waste reduction/ zero-waste, recycling, backyard composting, product re-use, and hazardous waste.
Facilitate a group buy program to offer compost bins to City residents and businesses.
<i>Something to increase participation in the UPS packing materials option for reusing those materials.</i>

Mid-term Actions
Create a program to encourage and facilitate the practical reuse of waste from private and municipal construction projects.
Create a guide for residents who are moving that provides resources to manage solid waste, especially donation sites and hazardous waste education.

Long-term Actions

Create a City compost site for food waste/ Research feasibility...
Create a community upcycle location or event.
Maintain a tool-sharing library.

For Appendix A:

KEY (from McFarland Plan)

- Responsible Committee or Commission*** CW Committee of the Whole
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- n/a** Can be done at staff level without committee or commission involvement.

Priority Rankings

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	Medium	\$\$	Medium	6 mos - 1 yr,	In Progress	City Clerk	
	High	\$\$\$	High	1 - 3 years, 3+ yrs, Recurring, Ongoing		Finance & Accounting Human Resource Parks & Recreation Planning & Development Police Public Library Public Works Senior Center Utilities WSTO TV (not listed above: Assessor, EMS, Fire, Municipal Court, Opera House)	
Near term actions:							

Establish an Annual Clean Sweep event - with either Dane County Clean Sweep Program or Veolia	High	??	Medium	Recurring	Not Begun	??	??
Create a municipal purchasing policy that requires consideration be given to whether a product is made from renewable and/or recycled materials.	Medium	\$	Low	3-6 mos	Not Begun	??	??
Utilize social media and other forms of communication to regularly inform residents about waste reduction/ zero-waste, recycling, backyard composting, product re-use, and hazardous waste.	Medium	\$	Medium	Recurring	In Progress	??	??
Facilitate a group buy program to offer compost bins to City residents and businesses.	Low	\$	High	Recurring	Not Begun	??	??
Mid-term actions:						??	??
Create a program to encourage and facilitate the practical reuse of waste from private and municipal construction projects.	Medium	\$\$	High	6 mos - 1 yr	Not Begun	??	??
Create a guide for residents who are moving that provides resources to manage solid waste, especially donation sites and hazardous waste education.	Low/Me dium?	\$	Medium /High?	6 mos - 1 yr	Not Begun	??	??
Long-term actions:						??	??
Create a City compost site for food waste/ Research feasibility...	High	\$\$	High	1-3 years	Not Begun	??	??
Create a community upcycle location or event.	Low	\$\$	High	Recurring	Not Begun	??	??
Maintain a tool-sharing library	Medium	\$\$\$	High	Ongoing	Not Begun	??	??

For further research:

Communities are welcome to independently organize and hold their own household hazardous waste collection event through the state [hazardous waste contractor](#). Additionally, municipalities may request a collection event in their area by contacting Dane County Clean Sweep Program, (608) 838-3212.

Need to contact John's and inquire about: **262-473-4700**

- recycling - how much is actually recycled? Why is it so low? What can be done about it?
- Measuring waste and recycling:
 - Do you weigh trash picked up?
 - And recycling - is it a %age of total weight?
 - Bulk pick-ups? is this as part of total weight (tons/yr)
 - Do you have a way to measure contamination?
 - People putting trash in recycling bin?
 - People putting recycling in trash?
 - People putting e-waste and hazardous waste in trash/recycling?
 - Microwaves and dehumidifiers?? Not accepted by city, John's, or Dane Co.?

Need to follow-up on lightbulb recycling... LEDs are 2nd most expensive to recycle (\$3.10/bulb). Will people actually pay to recycle bulbs? How can we reduce the cost or make it free to recycle?

<https://www.homedepot.com/c/ab/how-to-dispose-of-lightbulbs/9ba683603be9fa5395fab901b263d806>

Land Use and Development

“When we see land as community to which we belong, we may begin to use it with love and respect”
A Sand County Almanac

Introduction - Dane County is one of the fastest growing counties in Wisconsin and has some of the best farmland in the country. Stoughton is committed to changing development patterns to use land and its resources more efficiently, prevent car dependence by having a walkable and bikeable community while preserving environmental corridors.

Stoughton will promote the planting of native vegetation and shade trees. We recognize that providing a healthy environment for our pollinators is essential to our food supply. In addition, native plants promote water infiltration. By increasing the tree canopy in an area, we can decrease outside temperatures by 10 degrees in the summer. When shade trees are planted in the right place around buildings energy consumption can be decreased by 25%.

Vision (copied from [community dialogue handout](#))

The City of Stoughton acknowledges that land is a precious resource and strives to increase developed areas conservatively, only as needed to meet the needs of its growing population. It encourages compact, efficient growth that incorporates mixed use development, diversity of housing types, thriving businesses, and preserved and restored natural habitats.

Goals

copied from [community dialogue handout](#):

1. Provide housing for all income levels.
2. Promote bicycle and pedestrian friendly neighborhoods and business districts.
3. Increase the density of housing and population.
4. Protect environmentally sensitive areas.
5. Increase tree cover.
6. Increase land area in natural & native vegetation.
7. Increase use of sustainable building practices, including net-zero.
8. Support local sustainable agriculture.

From Denise:

1-More efficient use of land

- 2-Expand and maintain tree canopy
- 3-Increase the use of native plants on public lands
- 4-Promote and increase the use of native plants on private property
- 5-Increase the use of sustainable building practices

{Objective}/Indicator	Baseline	Target
Increase the number of dwelling units (du) per acre (a) over the next 10 years	5.62 du/a	6.0 du/a
Increase the tree canopy in the City over the next 10 years	25-28%	27-30%
Over the next 10 years increase native plants/prairies on City property	7 acres	14 acres
Promote the use of native plants on private property	0	25 homes
Form a city group/committee to negotiate with developers on sustainable building practices	0	1 group/committee

(Focus Area) Actions (see Appendix A for detailed implementation considerations)

Near-term Actions
Review and update City’s plans and ordinances to allow smaller lots, decrease setbacks, granny flats, less land for parking lots, more multi-family
Identify and inventory areas for in-fill and find ways to incentivize their development first
Identify parkrows lacking trees, parks with few trees and implement a plan to plant shade trees over the next 5-10 years
City Council will increase funding in the CIP over the next 5-10 years to increase the purchase and planting of shade trees on public lands

The Tree Commission will develop a program to have citizens buy shade trees at cost from the city and develop educational materials on planting and care of the tree.

The Tree Commission will work with the Sustainability Committee and community groups to encourage planting of trees on private property.

City Departments will examine city property and identify opportunities to replace turf grass with native plants i.e. prairie, buffalo grass.

Form a working group of staff, City Council members, and citizens to outline current energy efficiency standards for buildings as per state statute. List other energy efficiency options along with cost. Work with planners, developers, and contractors to incorporate more sustainable building designs. Provide incentives if necessary based on the cost of exceeding state standards.

Mid-term Actions

Pursue Boundary Agreements with townships to preserve farmland, wetlands, and grasslands

Review and update City's Comprehensive Land Use Plan to protect environmentally sensitive areas

Change ordinance to require that parkrows are wide enough to support shade trees

When parkrow is too narrow to support shade tree allow for planting on residences property with permission

The Tree Commission should develop guidelines for best practices for increasing tree canopy in new developments and established neighborhoods.

Change city ordinance to allow native plants to replace turf grass without penalty

The Sustainability Committee will work with community organizations to educate the public about the benefits of native plants

The City Council needs to explore the possibility of a "green" neighborhood development and what it would look like.

Long-term Actions

Review requirements for street widths and reduce when appropriate during reconstruction

Explore alternatives to asphalt to help promote tree growth and increase water infiltration

Priority Rankings

Near-Term = First Priority - Begin in 1-2 years

Mid-Term = Second Priority - Begin in 2-4 years

Long-Term = Third Priority - Begin in 4+ years

Near Term

(FA) Actions	Impact	Cost	Staff Effort	Duration	Status	Responsible department	Responsible Committee/ Commission
Review and update City's plans and ordinances to allow smaller lots, decrease setbacks, granny flats, less land for parking lots, more multi-family	High	\$	Low	6 mos - 1 yr,		City Council, Planning Commission, Planning & Development	
Identify and inventory areas for in-fill and find ways to incentivize their development first	High	\$\$	Medium	recurring		City Council, Planning & Development	
Identify parkrows lacking trees, parks with few trees, and implement a plan to plant shade trees over the next 5-10 years	High	\$\$\$	High	ongoing		City Council, Public Works, Parks & Rec, Tree Commission	
City Council will increase funding in the CIP over the next 5-10 years to increase the purchase and planting of shade trees on public lands	High	\$\$\$	High	ongoing		City Council, Public Works, Park & Rec, Tree Commission	
The Tree Commission will develop a program to have citizens buy shade trees at cost from the city and develop educational materials on planting and care for the tree.	High	\$	Medium	ongoing		Public Works, Tree Commission	
The Tree Commission will work with the Sustainability Committee and community groups to encourage planting of trees on private property	High	\$	Medium	ongoing		Tree Commission, Sustainability Committee	
City Departments will examine city property and identify opportunities to replace turf grass with native plants i.e. prairie, buffalo grass	Medium	\$\$	Medium	ongoing		Parks & Rec, Planning & Development, Public Works, Utilities	
Form a working group of staff, City Council.... Cost of exceeding state standards.	Medium	\$\$\$	High	recurring		City Council, Planning & Development, Mayor, Utilities	

Mid-Term Actions

Pursue Boundary Agreements with townships to preserve farmland, wetlands, and grasslands	low	\$	Medium	1-3 years		Mayor, Planning & development	
Review and update City's Comprehensive Land Use Plan to protect environmentally sensitive areas	low	\$	low	1-3 years		Planning Commission, Planning & Development	
Change ordinance to require that parkrows are wide enough to support shade trees	medium	\$	Low	3-6 months		City Council	
When parkrow is too narrow to support shade tree allow for planting on residences property with permission	medium	\$	medium	ongoing		City Council, Public Works	
The Tree commission should develop guidelines for best practices for increasing tree canopy in new developments and established neighborhoods	medium	\$	medium	1-3 years		Public Works, Tree Commission	
Change City Ordinance to allow native plants to replace turf grass without penalty	low	\$	low	1-3 years		City Council, Public Works	
The Sustainability Committee will work with community organizations to educate the public about the benefits of native plants and shade trees	medium	\$	low	1-3 years		Sustainability Committee	
The City Council needs to explore the possibility of a "green" neighborhood development and what it would look like.	high	\$	medium	3+ years		City Council, Mayor, Planning & Development, Public Works, Utilities	

Long-Term Actions

Review requirements for street widths and reduce when appropriate during reconstruction	low	\$	low	ongoing		Public Works	
Explore alternatives to asphalt to help promote tree growth and increase water infiltration	medium	\$\$	low	6mos-1 year		Public Works	

Energy

Our energy usage is one of the most crucial puzzles to solve if we are going to avoid the worst effects of climate change. We need to reduce the carbon dioxide and methane emitted in production of our energy for both electricity and transportation as quickly as possible.

As a city government, we have control over how we use energy in our facilities and vehicle fleet. Solar power investments both increase the clean energy in our mix and reduce the city's yearly operating expenses, which are capped by state law. Our public utility services the city and surrounding areas, and already ranks in the top 10 nationally in its Choose Renewables program participation.

We can also encourage energy-efficient decisions within the community through public education and by increasing awareness of public programs. We can use city ordinance to guide business

- **Vision**

The City of Stoughton reduces its operational impact on energy resources that contribute to climate change, and supports business and community efforts in doing the same. The City achieves this by embracing energy efficiency and conservation, while decreasing the use of fossil fuels.

- **Goal 1** - Reduce total greenhouse gas emissions.
- **Goal 2** - Achieve 100% renewable electricity supply.
- **Goal 3** - Reduce total energy consumption.
- **Goal 4** - Decrease energy intensity. (Quantity of energy/ unit of activity).
This will allow for decreases in energy while allowing for growth.

- **Objectives**

Emissions

{Objective}/Indicator	Baseline	Target
Reduce city fleet fuel emissions	Measure carbon impact of aggregate diesel/gas consumption	15% reduction by 2033

Increase voluntary Choose Renewable enrollment among utility customers	Current measure	10% of households by X? X% of businesses
Increase count of customer-owned solar power systems in Stoughton Utilities service area	135 (per Stoughton Utilities website 5/17/23 https://stoughtonutilities.com/residential/solar)	400 by 2033
Reduce city building energy use	Total current electricity usage Total current gas usage	30% reduction in natural gas
Increase EV charging infrastructure	X public chargers	Y public chargers
Increase total Stoughton Utilities renewable energy mix		70% by 2035

(Focus Area)

Actions (see Appendix A for detailed implementation considerations)

Near-term Actions
Use ordinance to require new gas stations to support EV infrastructure as well
Continue to publicize Choose Renewable program through multiple channels
Help connect residents to knowledge about solar power, available tax credits and Focus on Energy programs
Target locations for public EV charging infrastructure

Mid-term Actions
Municipal Solar power project

Long-term Actions
Enforce sustainable building standards for new city facilities going forward
Retrofit city buildings with heat pumps to reduce natural gas usage

For Appendix A:

KEY (from McFarland Plan)

Responsible Committee or Commission*

- CW** Committee of the Whole
- FC** Finance Committee
- PC** Plan Commission
- PK** Parks Committee
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- PU** Public Utilities
- PW**

Community Engagement & Education

Notes from Kate: I think that since there was such a public push for “community health” that we should maybe change this section to “Community Health and Engagement” since education falls under the “engagement” category. I know this has been discussed before and not sure if this is still up for discussion, but I just want to voice my opinion. I think that will help some of the recommendations that are more health and wellness-related make more sense to whoever reads the plan.

Introduction (from previous work)

Community sustainability is ultimately about sustaining a high quality of life for residents, and the health of individuals and families is critical to quality of life. Health is interconnected with the economic and environmental conditions that determine community sustainability. A healthy community is also an equitable community, in which all residents have adequate resources and opportunities to maintain their health.

In addressing the global, regional, and local issues facing Stoughton, the City recognizes that the education and engagement of the public are vital to effectively planning & implementing actions to promote a sustainable future. The City will work with citizens, businesses and community groups to make informed decisions and engage in sustainability actions and initiatives that will improve environmental quality and quality of life in our community and region.

Vision

The City of Stoughton promotes an ethic of sustainability by encouraging and empowering residents, businesses, and community groups to take actions that improve environmental and human health. Through learning and engagement opportunities for residents, schools, businesses and organizations, sustainability is a part of life for all in our community.

Goals

1. Increase collaboration and connections among citizens, businesses, schools, city government, and organizations to promote sustainability awareness & engagement.
2. Increase the sustainability awareness of Stoughton residents, city staff, and businesses through innovative programs.

3. Increase the number of residents and businesses that have implemented sustainable practices, such as those listed in other focus areas of this Plan.
4. Ensure sustainability is considered in decision-making processes by the City of Stoughton, including the city budget process.
5. Support high quality of life through promotion of wellness activities, healthy local food, safe walking and bicycling, and reduction in environmental toxins.

{Objective}/Indicator	Baseline	Target
Area of community gardens		increase
# of attendees at Sustainability Events/Workshops		increase
# of hits on Sustainability resources website/social media site		increase
Number of library check-outs from a sustainability section	unknown	increase
# of city staff who receive sustainability training (reported from city departments)	unknown	increase
# of businesses owned by women	53	increase
# of businesses owned by BIPOC	unknown	increase
Residents who receive an environmental message (related to the implementation of this document)	unknown	increase

Percentage of students in elementary and Middle School that qualify for free and reduced lunch (This indicator provides a basis of the ability of families to provide basic needs for school aged children.)	unknown	decrease
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Note: I think a lot of indicators in other sections are also useful for tracking whether or not our community engagement is working – for example, if “lbs of food waste to the landfill” decreases or “# of people participating in Stoughton Utilities Renewables program” increases, then I think our outreach effort is working. In a lot of ways this section overlaps with the others. Was thinking of including recommendations about community solar and bike paths, but then realized those would be included in energy and transportation, so I did not include those here.

(Focus Area)

Actions (see Appendix A for detailed implementation considerations)

Near-term Actions
<p>Create a page on the city website dedicated to Sustainability Resources. Include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -information/links of what various local groups are doing regarding sustainability and how to get involved (Sustainable Stoughton, Stoughton Lion’s Club, Scouts, church groups, etc.) -farmer’s market details/vendors -community garden information -info on community resources such as food pantry, jobs, housing, skills, etc. -information on renewable energy and related incentives
<p>Add a city-wide community service day focused on sustainability.</p>
<p>Make sustainability the focus at local events (Syttende Mai, farmer’s markets) - provide well-labeled recycling and composting receptacles, encourage people to use</p>

their own bags, limit unnecessary “swag”, make plastic-free, offer healthy food choices, encourage walking/biking, have water refill stations

Provide resources to neighborhood associations and city alders encouraging residents to install rain barrels, rain gardens, and (esp. native) plantings to retain water on their lots.

Partner with organizations within our community (e.g. Sustainable Stoughton, Stoughton Library, and other orgs/businesses that have adopted sustainable practices) to hold regular and frequent community education events on things like local recycling guidelines, composting, lawn/yard care, water and waste reduction, home upgrades, accessing tax incentives/credits, etc.

Perform an assessment of UniRoyal’s impact on public and environmental health. Engage the company in discussion of reducing air pollutants and what their future plans for expansion or potential relocation (inspired by survey comments)

Work with the Stoughton Library to have a dedicated sustainability section which can include books, media, and a bulletin board of local resources/educational events.

Create an annual event for collaboration among the City, Chamber of Commerce, Downtown Business Association, and School Board to connect, collaborate and share ideas regarding sustainability within the community.

Mid-term Actions

Add community gardens to the schools that 1) will be used as a sustainability education tool 2) source healthy produce to the school cafeterias and 3) compost school cafeteria and yard waste.

Engage youth groups - Scouts, Stoughton Youth Center, church youth groups, etc. on sustainability issues. Partner with the school district to add sustainability to curriculum,

offer after school programs, or design field trips around community sustainability.
Host a sustainable home and business tour
Host City-sponsored biking and run/walk events
Annually publish a progress report on sustainability in the community, in municipal operations, and around the region. Could be communicated via a newsletter, on the city website, signage in park shelters and articles in the local newspaper.
Increase accessibility and availability of entrepreneurial resources through the creation of a business incubator and/or coworking space while encouraging businesses to adopt sustainable Practices (FabLab, Stoughton Innovation Center, other Maker Spaces).
Encourage/Incentivize businesses to join programs such as the Wisconsin Sustainable Business Council or Sustain Dane.
Ensure that all local proposals account for, connect with and support the plans of adjacent jurisdictions and the surrounding region.
Establish a dedicated all-City Department sustainability meeting that meets regularly to discuss and coordinate sustainability practices.
Assess and improve accessibility to healthy food options.

Long-term Actions
Require sustainability training for all City Staff to make sustainability a main driver in city planning and development. Could give a sustainability presentation to each city committee. Include sustainability in job descriptions, training, and performance reviews of city employees or could give them an option to attend a

workshop/presentation or a Sustain Dane event (which the city already subscribes to).
Offer ADA-accessible nature preserve and trails.
Provide a permanent, indoor, year-round public market featuring local goods/services.
Highlight Stoughton businesses that prioritize sustainability and equity in their business practices through City Awards

For Appendix A:

KEY (from McFarland Plan)

Responsible Committee or Commission*

CW

Committee of the Whole

FC

Finance Committee

PC

Plan Commission

PK

Parks Committee

PS

Public Safety Committee

PU

Public Utilities

PW

Public Works Committee

n/a

Can be done at staff level without committee or commission involvement.

Priority Rankings

Near-Term =

First Priority - Begin in 1-2 years

Mid-Term =

Second Priority - Begin in 2-4 years

Long-Term =

Third Priority - Begin in 4+ years

Actions	Impact	Co st	Staff Effort	Duration	Status	Responsible department	Responsible Committee/ Commission
Temporary reference row:	Low	\$	Low	3-6 mos,	Not Begun	Administration ??	https://www.cityofstoughton.com/boards-committees-commissions
	Medium	\$\$	Medium	6 mos - 1 yr,	In Progress	City Clerk Finance & Accounting Human Resource Parks & Recreation Planning & Development Police Public Library Public Works Senior Center Utilities WSTO TV (not listed above: Assessor, EMS, Fire, Municipal Court, Opera House)	
	High	\$\$\$	High	1 - 3 years, 3+ yrs, Recurring, Ongoing			
Create Sustainability Website	High	\$	Medium	6 mos - 1 year	Not Begun	Administrati on	

Add a city-wide community service day	Medium	\$	Medium	3-6 mos	Not Begun	Parks	

Stoughton Sustainability Committee

Focus Group Summary Report

Prepared By:

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Overview

The Stoughton Sustainability Committee has been working for the past two years to study sustainability issues in Stoughton. The committee is in the process of writing a sustainability plan that includes recommendations for City actions to foster sustainability and reduce the risk of climate impacts.

A big part of the Committee's work has been in gathering public input. The committee hosted an in-person dialogue on sustainability (9/21/2022, with over 60 people in attendance) recently sent out a community-wide survey (garnering over 560 responses), and hosted focus groups. Educators with UW-Madison Division of Extension assisted the Committee with planning, facilitating and analyzing the focus groups.

The purpose of focus groups is to get input from specific audiences who may not have been engaged in the community dialogue or survey, and who are important in the implementation of the sustainability plan and recommendations. In order to gain input from the full-breath of sectors in Stoughton, focus groups were hosted for each of the following audiences:

- 1) Manufacturers
- 2) School District
- 3) Environmental Groups
- 4) Community Anchor Institutions
- 5) Developers

An invitation list of organizations within each audience was generated with assistance from Committee members, Mayor Swadley, and Council President Regina Hirsch (for the Developer group). Extension Dane County sent out invitations via email to the invite list, and worked with the committee to develop questions that were asked during the focus group. Sharon Lezberg and Michelle Probst facilitated the focus groups and recorded responses from attendees. A member of the Committee was present at each of the focus groups (with the exception of the manufacturing small group) to share background information about the Committee's activities and observe the conversation. Responses and conversations from each of the focus groups were summarized in a confidential manner and presented in this report.

How this report is organized

This summary report is organized by focus group audience. Recordings from the focus group were shared with attendees to ensure accuracy.

Each section of the report will identify who was represented at the focus group, an overview of current sustainable activities, barriers to adopting sustainable practices and policies, and opportunities for implementing sustainable practices.

A full recording of each of the focus groups can be found in Appendix A.

Key Takeaways from all Focus Groups

- **Need for a Sustainability Coordinator:** the City can take a lead in coordinating efforts and programs to avoid duplication of efforts, increase communication, promote collaboration, and track progress on sustainability goals.
- **Cross-sector Collaboration:** Industry, realtors, businesses, community institutions and schools are all working toward a goal of improved sustainability; communication, coordination, and collaboration will move these efforts forward efficiently and effectively.
- **Information sharing:** focus group participants consistently asked for information about sustainability practices, opportunities, and resources. The City (or a designated organization, such as the Innovation Center) can be a hub for information sharing.
- **Public education:** Nonprofit organizations can be great partners in providing public education. The City can support their efforts by providing space for demonstration sites and partnering on programs. Sustainable Stoughton has a strong role to play in linking organizations/resources to the community and the City government.
- **City Sustainability Goals:** Developers, industry, and the School District all requested clear goals from the City, so that they know the indicators of success and can work toward these.
- **Continuous feedback and improvement:** The City should solicit feedback on a regular basis from various sectors and constituents about these goals and what it will take to achieve them.
- **City as Convenor:** Various sectors benefit from having conversations with other representatives in order to learn from each other and share innovative strategies. Industry and developers, in particular, would benefit from having a convenor to host dialogues for learning, collaboration, and resource sharing.
- **Focus on Impact:** While there were many opportunities suggested for how to improve sustainability within various sectors, it is important to analyze the impact each initiative might have, and to recognize both cost and effort constraints.

School District Focus Group Summary

During the community engagement process, there were many opportunities identified for the schools as the schools are seen as a valuable part of the community.

Participants to the School District focus group were identified by Dr. Daniel Keyser, the District Administrator. Sustainability Committee member Steve Jackson reached out to Dr. Keyser to discuss who should attend. The following representatives were deemed important to the conversation, and were invited to attend the focus group:

- Facility manager
- Advisor to the H.S. Environmental Club
- High School Principal
- Jr. High School Principal
- Elementary School Principal
- Food Service representative
- Teachers
- Parent Group “Working for Kids”
- Students (environmental club participants)

The purpose of hosting a focus group with the school district was to understand the following:

- What sustainability innovations are possible?
- What are the barriers to sustainability?
- How is sustainability being taught?
- What opportunities are there for students to get involved in sustainability initiatives in their school?
- Where are opportunities for partnerships (in education/ in implementation of sustainability plans

Attendees:

Due to the support from the school district Administrator, most of the invitees were in attendance at the focus group. Attendees included administrators, teachers, the facility manager, a representative from the school board, a representative from the parent group ‘Working For Kids,’ and two students from the high school environmental club.

Current Activities:

The school district has focused a lot on energy efficiency. They’ve made upgrades in LED lighting, occupant sensors, HVAC remodels, and have worked with Focus on Energy to determine what to invest in. The recently passed referendum will fund solar panels and energy efficient windows.

There are many natural spaces for students to explore. The high school has the arboretum and there’s a garden at Fox Prairie. Expanding these natural spaces can be a great way to partner

with community organizations and expand learning opportunities. Additionally, the high school has replaced soccer fields with turf to conserve water.

Additionally, the high school has an environmental club that focuses on sustainability. Although they haven't quite gotten the group off the ground, the students have been involved in the Community Dialogue and this focus group.

Barriers:

Attendees identified that funding is an issue, the return on investment for solar panels isn't always the greatest, so it takes a lot of support to fund clean energy initiatives. Investing in energy efficiency is also difficult because everything will need to be retrofitted to existing schools. A lot of energy efficiency initiatives are easier when a brand new building is being built, and a brand new building would be a significant capital investment. While there are grant opportunities available, it is difficult to know who to talk to about opportunities.

Getting community support for these initiatives can be difficult, if the community doesn't have kids in the school system, the school is not seen as integrated in the community. While education definitely has its opportunities, it is difficult to go beyond individual actions and make systemic change. Schools can play a very important role in providing this education, but this impact will be much later after students have graduated so it can take up to 10 years to see this impact.

It was also shared that students lack interest in sustainability and this makes it a challenge to educate on sustainability issues. While increasing awareness in students is a great goal, students don't have the support from larger entities, like governments and decision-makers, to enact changes. There is a disconnect between the leaders and community residents.

What's Possible:

There is motivation for the school district to incorporate sustainability and social justice into all of their planning efforts. Building a partnership with the City can help coordinate sustainability efforts to maximize impacts in the community. The City and Dane County can work to develop planned communities that are connected by paths and amenities and wouldn't require as much driving. Additionally, the City and School could partner with Findorff and EUA for capital investments.

Reducing food waste in cafeterias is another opportunity. This could be done by collecting food scraps and then composting the food waste. The student club is supportive of this, but recognizes that composting would require a lot of logistics. There is an opportunity through the referendum that was recently passed to redo the cafeteria and look at where food is produced and understand what infrastructure is needed to collect and compost food scraps. Additionally, attendees recognized that composting is a great way to support a closed loop system—the waste that is generated in the school is made into compost that can be used right at the school. This learning opportunity is great for students and their parents.

There is a significant need to invest in cleaner and safer transportation alternatives. A lot of students don't have drivers licenses due to costs and the pandemic, so they have a lot of trouble getting around town and it's a safety issue. Having a trolley along mainstreet or a bus to Madison can help students be mobile in the community. Building safe bike lanes can help students get around town, and partnering with B-cycle, bike giveaway and maintenance programs can ensure that all students can have access to bikes. Additionally, installing an EV charging station at the school and investing in electric buses can invest in clean transportation options.

Schools can lead sustainability initiatives by educating students and their families. While it can be difficult to keep the momentum moving long-term, the schools work with the community every day. Schools additionally have visibility in the community and can showcase what can be done at home. Partnering with the City to educate and distribute information on sustainability can be very effective.

Key Takeaways:

The School district has made great strides in energy efficiency (by improving building lighting and HVAC systems); the recent referendum will allow solar on rooftop, window replacement, and further energy efficiency measures. The referendum also presents an opportunity to upgrade cafeteria infrastructure to allow food waste collection. These advances are important for energy efficiency and for student learning comfort.

Schools have a mandate to educate students, yet it has been difficult to engage students in these efforts for several reasons: students are already busy with other sports, enrichment, and social activities, and have shown little interest in attending environmental club meetings; students aren't around for long enough to build a multi-year program or to catalyze big changes. Nevertheless, students are interested in sustainability and concerned about their future, and efforts to build sustained programs, such as in food waste composting, should be sustained. Teachers can use environmentally themed activities for classroom education.

Similarly, schools can be a vehicle for community education and can catalyze community involvement. School grounds can showcase sustainability practices (composting, rain barrels, rain gardens, natural landscapes, native and pollinator gardens). Focus group attendees supported City/School partnerships to showcase innovation and to educate the public.

A critical need that links the schools with the community is that of expanding safe multimodal transportation options. Students tend to drive to the High School because there are no public transportation options. Participants suggested that the City and School work together to improve bicycle and pedestrian safe routes to school, and to provide public transportation for youth to get to school and to job sites.

Manufacturing & Industry Focus Group Summary

Industry and businesses can contribute to a more sustainable community by addressing production processes, energy and water use, materials sourcing, waste management, and product innovation. Increasingly, as customers demand more sustainable management, industry and business stand to benefit from incorporating sustainability into their manufacturing and customer services processes.

We invited representatives from 12 different businesses to the focus group, including:

- Cummins
- Emmi Roth Specialty Cheese
- Kunes Country GM Superstore
- Marquis Metal
- Stoughton Health
- Stoughton Hospital
- Stoughton Lumber Company
- Stoughton Trailers
- Stoughton Utility
- Uniroyal Engineering Products
- Zalk Josephs Fabricators
- Zinkpower-Stoughton

Unfortunately, we received only three responses from industry indicating willingness to participate (Stoughton Utilities was scheduled to participate during a second focus group; this was canceled due to the fact that the Committee has previously met with representatives of Stoughton Utilities). The low response rate is not surprising, in that neither the committee nor the facilitators had existing relationships with these companies or with the industry sector. Nevertheless, the low turnout leaves open a door for future educational opportunities, such as roundtable discussions for industry representatives to learn from each other and to share ideas.

The purpose of hosting a focus group with industry representatives was:

- To understand current industry sustainability efforts;
- To recognize barriers that get in the way of sustainable manufacturing or management processes;
- To identify opportunities to reduce the barriers and encourage innovation

Attendees:

There were three attendees at the focus group, representing Emmi Roth USA (Specialty Cheese) and Stoughton Health.

Current Activities:

Emmi Roth is a specialty cheese manufacturer, with three production facilities and one distribution facility. Emmi Roth has put concerted attention towards sustainability throughout the

company, and specifically with regard to the new facility in Stoughton. The Stoughton plant is a conversion facility, where the primary activity will be repackaging cheese products. The parent company - the Emmi Group - based in Switzerland, has mandated sustainability practices. Emmi Roth has a dedicated staff person as Sustainability Manager. Clearly articulated company values and staff capacity for sustainability has made a huge difference. The company considers sustainability criteria in decision making and has established green teams in all facilities to help with tactical implementation. Some notable efforts include:

- Reducing water use by 50% since 2019 by taking care of leaks in the pipes and recycling cooling water;
- Reducing energy use with the goal of reaching net zero by 2050;
- Working with industry groups to address waste reduction in cheese production;
- Setting goals for water use, waste reduction, recyclable packaging, emissions reduction;
- Incorporating staff in sustainability decision-making and challenges through 'Green Teams' in all facilities; encouraging sustainability champions;
- Design of the Stoughton facility to promote recycling;
- Native plant landscaping;
- Working the Innovation Center for U.S.Dairy to improve farm soil health practices.

Stoughton Hospital has had to focus on Covid challenges over the last three years, which has hampered sustainability efforts, in that all staff have been fully occupied with treating patients and incorporating measures to contain the spread. Additionally, the pandemic forced the Hospital to move toward throw-away projects (both in medical care and food services). Due to the increase in waste stream, they have made a large investment in biodegradable materials.

There are individuals within the organization who are sustainability champions, and efforts can now resume as the pandemic wanes. Past and current efforts include:

- Installation of 4 EV chargers;
- Investigating microgrids to reduce reliance on backup generators;
- Facility expansion will have capacity for solar power in the future (this could reduce energy costs by 30%); currently the cost is too high and ROI is too long to do this;
- Interior lighting throughout the facility is being replaced with LED lighting.

Sustainability, in the past, was not seen as a high priority in health care, but public interest can move the industry to step up. When hospitals and health care facilities are being built new, there are many more options to incorporate sustainable design; it is harder to do with retrofits.

Barriers:

In cheese production, there are two major constraints to sustainability. Emmi Roth buys milk from dairy producer coops and does not dictate farm production practices. The company indirectly influences dairy production practices through their participation in sustainable farming organizations and research initiatives. A second constraint concerns the waste stream: Cheese manufacturing generates a lot of waste, and there is no immediate option for reusing or disposing of this waste.

A barrier for both industries is finding the return on investment for adoption of new, energy saving technologies, as some initiatives are too costly to justify. Investment capital or grants is necessary with technologies that have a long ROI. Lack of information about, or understanding of, new technologies impedes adoption of such technologies. Facilities personnel need to keep abreast of new innovations in order to make decisions that benefit the industry in the future.

What's Possible:

According to focus group participants, collaboration and information sharing across industries will be essential to accelerating innovation. Cross-industry and community-involved collaborations will present more options than relying on one industry alone to find a solution (an example is with waste from cheese manufacturing - the solution will likely be found across multiple industries that generate food waste, and will involve large-scale food digestion facilities). Cost-sharing partnerships between industries and sectors is essential (an example is a partnership between LaCrosse's Gunderson Hospital and Organic Valley to put up wind turbines).

Healthcare is a unique sector, and it operates as an island. There is not currently a focus on sustainability in this field. The industry would benefit from cross-fertilization and learning from other industry sectors. The representative from Stoughton Hospitals advocated strongly for industry round table discussions in order to learn from other industries who are innovating at scale. For example, hospitals feed a lot of people. There are other facilities (ex. Epic) that feed at scale and have lessons that can be shared.

Key Takeaways:

Industries and businesses are key partners in moving toward a more sustainable future. Industrial processes utilize a great deal of materials and energy, and generate waste and greenhouse gas emissions. Every industry has opportunities to improve their sustainability without impeding on profitability. Additionally, industry and business employ a great many people who will be influenced by the sustainability initiatives taken on by the corporation, and who will be more likely to adopt sustainable practices in their own homes and community activities. This positive method of 'contagion' helps spread energy and resource saving practices from work to home to community.

Industry actors need to be attentive to both return on investment and public opinion. If ROI is negative but public opinion in support of moving toward more sustainable practices, the public sector will have to help fund changes. If both public opinion and ROI are positive, industry can fast-forward initiatives. If the public (and/or employees) is/are not in support of change, there is no motivating rationale for industry to make changes.

Developers Focus Group Summary

Developers (housing, commercial facilities, redevelopment entities) have opportunities to integrate sustainability and energy conservation into their building and location design. However, developers also operate under fiscal constraints, and are balancing cost of materials and labor on one hand, with state regulations and community preferences on the other. City government has very little opportunity to impose sustainability requirements above and beyond state code. The Sustainability Committee, in requesting a focus group with developers, was seeking to understand the parameters under which developers operate, and to get a sense of whether developers are willing to voluntarily build sustainably.

The facilitators worked with Council member Regina Hirsch and Mayor Tim Swadley to identify potential participants for this focus group. Some developers were identified but not invited due to the lack of a contact name and email. The following businesses and organizations were invited:

- Curt Brink Builders
- Eldon Homes
- Forward Development Group
- Friede Associates
- Independent realtor
- Lennar
- Matson Custom Homes
- RHD Properties
- Shaw Building & Design
- Stoughton Housing Authority/Senior Center
- Stoughton Redevelopment Authority
- Stoughton Trailers (STI) Holdings

The purpose of hosting a focus group with developers was:

- To understand current sustainability practices and products in housing/facility development;
- To recognize barriers that get in the way of sustainable design;
- To identify opportunities to reduce the barriers and encourage innovation

Attendees:

Attendees included individuals representing the following developers:

- Eldon Homes
- Forward Development Group
- Friede Associates
- Stoughton Trailers and Holding
- Stoughton Housing Authority
- Stoughton Redevelopment Authority

Stoughton City Council President Regina Hirsch attended the focus group as a listener.

Current Activities:

Participants were asked which sustainability practices they were incorporating into building design. Most participants indicated that they include energy efficient appliances in new buildings. Half of the participants indicated that they include solar energy and/or tree planting in new facilities. Several good ideas were shared, including: conducting energy audits with a third party vendor, commercial gray-water recycling, geothermal energy systems, EV charging stations in parking structures, landscaping with trees, green roofs, lighting conservation, use of recycled construction materials, and standardizing use of energy efficient appliances. Of note is that customer demand is driving the increase in energy efficient appliances and rooftop solar.

Developers are looking at additional products and practices as more customers demand innovation. Design concepts suggested included:

- Solar should be considered early on in the design process.
- Engineering design and waste stream monitoring can be utilized to reduce lumber loss. This improves sustainability, reduces costs, and minimizes landfill waste.
- Premanufacturing of all wood systems in housing, where the unit is built off-site and assembled on-site. This reduces time, costs, and materials waste.
- Working with Habitat for Humanity [ReStore] to source efficient windows and appliances.
- Cooperative buying to reduce the cost of appliances, in particular heat pumps.

Sustainability plans/goals: Developers were asked if they had sustainability goals in place. Responses indicated that many have product and process standards in place, and that these evolve rapidly as the market changes and customer demand increases. Developers want to go beyond the code, but there are costs associated with being more sustainable. Using City processes to reduce costs is critical.

Barriers:

From the perspective of community residents (especially seniors) who want to have more sustainable homes, the City can provide financial support and programs to help them incorporate new practices.

For developers, the biggest barrier is cost and return on investment. Firms will take a risk and sacrifice ROI if a product or process is in line with their sustainability goals. Participants noted that the sustainability problem is dumped on developers, whereas it would be better to have private and public money working together to address sustainability. In particular, participants requested that there might be ways to reduce the overall cost of projects, such as waiving or reducing park fees and engineering fees.

What's Possible:

Developers are trying to incorporate sustainability practices and efficiency into new developments, but will always need to assure that there is a financial return on investment to doing so. As the public becomes more concerned with sustainable building and energy efficiency, there are increased benefits to building green. While park and engineering fees in Stoughton are high, developers will find that there are other benefits to developing in Stoughton,

especially as the City is willing to collaborate. The City needs to be clear and transparent about their goals around sustainability, so that developers can work through any new rules or expectations. The City can also provide non-financial incentives to developers through social media shout-outs and awarding a company for building sustainably.

Focus group participants indicated that increasing the size of city streets works against sustainability. Narrower streets (less pavement) will reduce runoff and lower costs of the car-focused infrastructure. Narrower streets also tend to slow traffic and reduce accidents. The City, alongside developers, should be looking at higher density housing.

Key Takeaways:

A partnership between the City and developers will be a path toward greater sustainability in building design and construction. The City should develop goals for sustainability, in regards to development, and work with Developers to provide feedback on goals and implement strategies to reach sustainability goals. Developers have to be concerned about return on investment, but that is not their only goal - they also want to be good community institutions and to serve the community. A partnership with the City will look for win-win solutions where the interests of both parties are served. Customers are key drivers to innovation; if customers demand energy efficiency, developers will follow suit.

Environmental Organizations Focus Group Summary

During the community engagement process, many community members shared ideas about how to provide environmental education and accelerate sustainability practices at the household and community level. Dane County has a wealth of environmental organizations that are leaders in providing environmental education. This focus group was intended to learn more about what these organizations are doing, and how the sustainability committee and Sustainable Stoughton could tap into their programs.

We invited a limited number of local and Dane County focused environmental organizations to the focus group. In that many environmental organizations are state-wide (and were not invited). In hindsight, we realized that we focused primarily on organizations that water quality and native planting, and did not have representation from those organizations that address issues of energy, transportation, and public health. The organizations invited included:

- Friends of Lake Kegonsa Society (FOLKS)
- Fort Littlegreen
- Groundswell
- Lake Kegonsa State Park Friends Group
- Low-tech Institute
- Madison Area Municipal Stormwater Partnership (MAMSWaP) Dane County Land & Water Resources Dept.
- Prairie Enthusiasts
- Rock River Coalition
- Sustain Dane

The purpose of hosting a focus group with environmental organizations was to understand the following:

- The role environmental organizations play in promoting sustainability in the community;
- Who environmental organizations partner with (or could partner with) in their work and in implementing sustainability practices;
- The barriers to accelerating sustainability.

Attendees:

Attendees included individuals representing the following environmental organizations:

- Sustainable Stoughton
- Rock River Coalition
- Friends of Lake Kegonsa
- Madison Area Municipal Stormwater Partnership (MAMSWaP) Dane County Land & Water Resources Dept.
- Sustain Dane

Current Activities:

Sustainable Stoughton was the only organization that specifically focused on the City of Stoughton. The current focus of the organization is encouraging native plants in backyards to provide habitat for pollinators and other wildlife.

Several of the organizations present work to increase awareness of surface water quality. Rock River Coalition works across the Rock River Basin (in which Stoughton resides) to collect surface water quality data through volunteer stream monitors. Additionally, they coordinate education and outreach on aquatic invasive species, stormwater, and recreation. The Friends of Lake Kegonsa provide educational events for shoreline property owners and promote practices that reduce runoff into the lake. These practices include rain barrels, planting native shorelines, and rain gardens. While many shoreline property owners have a Stoughton address, they are actually in the town of Dunn or Pleasant Springs. MAMSWaP and Dane County Land & Water Resource Dept. work with many communities across Dane County, including Stoughton, on stormwater education and outreach. The City of Stoughton is currently signed onto the 'Adopt a Storm Drain' program to keep storm drains clean and clear. Additionally, these organizations promote leaf free streets, rain gardens, and rain barrels to reduce stormwater runoff.

Sustain Dane shared information about programs, including 'All Around Dane County,' which showcases sustainability efforts in communities outside of Madison. Sustain Dane has piloted a food scrap collection program at Madison Farmers Markets. They also support energy efficiency through their Efficiency Navigator program.

Barriers:

When asked about barriers in promoting sustainability in Stoughton, organizations shared that messaging for events is very difficult. While reaching people is difficult, getting people to commit to attend programs is equally as challenging. There are so many things going on, and a lot of people don't have time that they choose to dedicate to learning about sustainability.

Additionally, organizations identified that there was a lack of awareness in Stoughton about the importance of native plants in parks and why parks are managed to maintain native plants.

What's Possible:

Organization representatives recognized that several of the environmental organizations attending the focus group are doing similar things. To ensure there isn't duplication of efforts, coordination and collaboration on programs would be very impactful. Additionally, environmental organizations can work together to promote what each organization is doing. Organizations such as Sustainable Stoughton, Friends of Lake Kegonsa and Rock River Coalition can work in Stoughton to share resources and educate community members. Additionally, Sustainable Stoughton can feature the work of environmental organizations in the City's Hub Spot every six weeks.

Attendees discussed opportunities to educate the public about energy conservation. The City could reach out to organizations like Renew Wisconsin to facilitate clean energy opportunities. Sustain Dane's Efficiency Navigator Program and Project Home could also bring energy efficiency programs to Stoughton.

There were many opportunities suggested for City-owned property to be a demonstration site to showcase practices that community members can implement at their home. Practices showcased at demonstration sites could include diverse native plants (including trees), rain barrels, rain gardens and downspout gardens (less work than a rain garden; plant native plants near a downspout), permeable pavers, etc. This is in line with current efforts by MAMSWaP, which is showcasing rain gardens and downspout gardens that are smaller in size so that it would be easier for a resident to envision a rain garden at their home. The demonstration sites have signage to educate residents. This could be a program that the City could participate in.

Additionally, Sustain Dane hosts a Food Scrap Collection Program in Madison where food scraps are collected at the South and East Madison Farmers Market and brought to Neighborhood Food Solutions farm in Fitchburg for composting. This is something that could be replicated in Stoughton by partnering with a local farm for composting.

When asked about support from the City, attendees recognized and were very supportive of the current collaboration and openness to new ideas. They would like to see this be continued, and work to put Sustainability Goals into action. Presentations and press releases to showcase the City's efforts can help the community be more open to new ideas.

Key Takeaways:

Dane County is the home of many nonprofit organizations doing environmental work across various issue areas. The City of Stoughton and Sustainable Stoughton should tap into the wealth of resources and programs that these organizations offer by supporting networking, recruiting organizations to provide educational resources and programming, and being a local resource for these organizations.

While connections were made with those organizations that attended the focus group, there are additional opportunities to network with, and develop educational programs on, a broader array of organizations to promote energy conservation, sustainable transportation, air quality, and solid waste management.

To further promote sustainability in Stoughton, the City can play a role in showcasing successes. This will get the word out and show how practices like native plantings, solar panels, and food waste composting are all possible for residents.

Community Anchor Institution Focus Group Summary

We are using the term ‘anchor Institutions’ to refer to community organizations and facilities that play a vital role in community identity, sense of place, and connecting residents to each other and to resources. Anchor institutions tend to be respected and promoted; as such, they are ‘influencers’ of community opinion and action. When anchor institutions adopt sustainability practices, these will be readily visible to both residents and visitors.

We invited a range of anchor institutions to our focus group, including:

- Stoughton Opera House
- Stoughton Chamber of Commerce
- Syttende Mai
- Visit Stoughton
- Downtown Business Association
- Innovation Center Stoughton
- Taste of Stoughton
- Livreise (Norwegian Heritage Center)

The purpose of hosting a focus group with representatives of anchor institutions was:

- To understand current sustainability efforts;
- To recognize barriers that get in the way of sustainable practices;
- To identify opportunities to reduce the barriers and amplify sustainability efforts

Attendees:

The anchor institution focus group was attended by representatives of three separate organizations (Stoughton Opera House, Downtown Business Association, Innovation Center Stoughton) and the Mayor. Those organizations that were not able to attend were wrapped up in planning for the annual Syttende Mai Festival (members of the Chamber and Taste of Stoughton indicated that they would like to participate in a future session).

Current Activities:

As each of the participating organizations is different, their sustainability initiatives are listed by organization.

Stoughton Opera House: The Opera House is a City-owned historic building that has been renovated through sustained efforts of the Friends of the Opera House. The Historic nature of the building poses some challenges in terms of energy upgrades. Several years back, a consulting organization (Slipstream) identified energy saving opportunities within the building. Lighting is an area for improvement. The Friends Group will be looking into upgrading the lighting for greater efficiency. Solar rooftop would be challenging, but as there is an opportunity to install solar on the adjacent fire house, which could support a portion of the energy use of the Opera House. The Opera House recently opened a lounge area for concessions and a welcome space for performers. The lounge provides food and drink, and the staff has endeavored to

identify serving materials that are recycled or compostable. Food provided to performers is organic and locally sourced.

Downtown Business Association: The DBA represents and supports local businesses along and nearby Main Street. They encourage businesses to carry products that have stories behind them, including recyclable and local products. The leaders of the DBA are interested in sharing information with businesses about how to compost food waste and in developing a branded, compostable container for local restaurants. Downtown buildings are owned by local businesses; these business owners could use financial assistance for energy efficiency upgrades.

Stoughton Innovation Center: The Innovation Center is a new concept that will provide shared maker space and a community hub to support skill development to increase labor force participation. The center has sustainability, job creation, community networking and resource sharing at its core. The hub aims to support new ideas and innovation in clean energy, food waste composting, and other sustainability concepts. They will share resources with residents about opportunities such as rebates for energy efficiency from the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA).

Barriers:

Participants at this focus group recognized that there are many events in Stoughton that bring people together; these events also generate a lot of waste. While there was interest in looking into ways to reduce waste - and specifically food waste - there are not a lot of options available for composting food waste. There are also questions regarding the use of compostable plates and cups, with the recognition that (at present) these still go into the landfill waste stream. The Innovation Center is poised to research food waste collection and composting. Participants were also interested in reducing packaging and recycling boxes and plastic bags.

What's Possible:

The organizations present at the focus group were passionate about encouraging discussions about waste reduction, food waste recycling, and other sustainability measures. These umbrella organizations have not yet prioritized sustainability in their discussions with members, or in their operations, and recognized the possibility of prioritizing sustainability through communications, changes in marketing practices, and encouraging collaboration in buying practices, community marketing, and sharing of resources. There were several ideas that participants were excited about:

- Bulk purchase of compostable to-go food containers that are Stoughton branded;
- Make it easier to deal with food waste;
- Encouraging small business owners to find energy efficiency measures for their buildings, such as heat-pumps.
- One source go-to for information on contractors, energy efficiency, and sustainability measures
- Zero waste events; recruiting volunteers to help separate garbage from compostable and recyclable materials

- Establish EV charging stations in the City

Key Takeaways:

Anchor institutions are in the public eye and can make things visible to community members. There are small scale innovations that can be taken to lift up businesses and organizations; these steps can be promoted and publicized in order to build a reputation for the community as a sustainable community. The City must play a leadership and visionary role. The City has a lot of expertise to put together action and provide resources and education to bring people together. The City (and Sustainability Committee) can bring in people more broadly through the process and bring in benchmarks and goals that we should work towards. The sustainability plan should identify who is responsible for what in order to meet the benchmarks.

Addendum: Recorded Notes from Focus Groups

Stoughton School Focus Group 4-19-2023

**Facilitator: Michelle Probst, Dane County Extension
Recorder: Sharon Lezberg, Dane County Extension
Sustainability Committee member: Steve Jackson**

Participants included school/District leadership, teachers, and students

Question 1 What are current efforts toward sustainability in the schools? (facilities, processes, student learning, engagement)

- Passed a referendum on building projects: maintenance building, gym. Solar panels in the facilities
- Referendum; Sandhill will get energy efficient windows. They have air conditioning. New windows will make sure that the cooler air is not leaking out.
- Natural spaces for students; HS has arboretum; garden at Fox Prairie – the students check out the gardens
- Referendum: energy upgrades – lighting for LED.; variable frequency drives; self-learning heating and cooling systems. Lighting, sensors, occupant sensors
 - After the referendum there will be these systems in all the HS rooms
 - Dimmer requested. Multiple sensors
 - Lights will take into account windows and natural lighting
- HS: HVAC remodel in past year; they are working the bugs out. Energy efficiency; cost savings with heating and cooling. (1 year old)
- Refillable water bottle stations. Students appreciate these.
- Soccer fields –new turf field versus old grass; pollinator garden (green space)
- Environmental club focused on sustainability; they are not quite off the ground
- Flooring chosen: uses less chemicals.
- Pesticide and herbicide applications across the district; they are working with the city to make sure that there is notification when nearby fields are sprayed with chemicals; any applications near Sandhill Elementary are done when kids are not in school
- Guideline for planning: they have to take into account sustainability in all of their planning efforts

Question 2 What are your current and future goals in terms of sustainability?

- Building a partnership with the city. Coordinate sustainability efforts in order to maximize impacts for the community
- Reduce food waste in the lunchroom (elementary school); desire to start a composting program (future goal); not currently happening. Parents come into the school to help with the lunch room; they are noticing the waste.
 - Student club at HS has talked about this a lot. Logistics of having someone stand at bins is difficult. Students have pushed for food waste composting.

- Referendum allows for the District to redo the cafeteria. Opportunity to look at where the food is produced. Concern about increasing variety in dietary choices to accommodate dietary restrictions.
- Electric vehicle charging station at school (for electric bikes and for drivers with electric cars); entertaining the idea of electric buses. (talk to Steve about this)
- Elementary school in past: a custodian was standing by the bins to collect the scraps and send them to a local pig farmer
- Continuing to make curricular connections; where are opportunities at elementary level to make connections/amplify thoughts about sustainability (e.g., sustainable food sourcing); always looking for more connections
- Transportation issues: public transit to Madison; within town; how to get people from one side of town to another (grocery stores on one side of town);
- Section 8 housing: people need transportation to get to jobs. (bus line to the south side transfer station).

The facilitator shared that the Sustainability Committee has several focus areas: energy, waste, water, transportation, land use, community engagement.

- Reducing water use. They have done a good job; there are ways that they can improve more. (e.g. turf)
 - Sustainable grass seed. Less water, impact resistant
 - Look across the district, not just sports fields
- Partnerships: Focus on Energy. Working with them annually
 - Facilities is partnering with them. They review all projects with FoE. They get rebates and get support on how to access these rebates
 - Energy savings on referendum, benefits.
- Partnership with City to get information as it comes forward
- Expand natural spaces; e.g., natural classroom. Partnered with the Boy Scouts. Great learning opportunities.
- Bring kids/families to natural spaces; those that many families do not have access to.
- Social Justice: how do we incorporate social justice into the plan? Baking in social justice to all the focus areas

Question 3 _What are the barriers to reaching these goals?

- Funding. ROI is not always the greatest. E.g. solar panels. Putting the solar in has to be done so that there is payback. There is a lot to getting support for funding these initiatives.
- Infrastructure: some barriers are not obvious. Long-term commitment needed. E.g., food waste. How do you source it out to local community recipients? Having a process that is continuous (beyond individuals); start small with an individual, then expand on it. It takes time, commitment, to get through the process of scaling up.
- Education: communicating why the process is important. To learn about it, build awareness. Community education – teach process and procedures that go with the sustainability initiatives
 - Teach the teachers so they can teach the students on how to do this (e.g., composting food waste); they also need to connect with the parents to do this at home

- Providing the information to generate the will; people have competing commitments
- HS Students: lack of interest; lack of care about sustainability. Challenge to get students interested. (also scheduling is challenging for Environmental club)
 - Educating kids in the classroom about sustainability will have beneficial impact in 10-15 years (starting with elementary age students)
 - Students/schools don't necessarily have the support from larger entities (government) and decision-makers/leaders (example., transportation initiatives); There is a disconnect between 'higher up's and community residents.
- Getting the community as a whole to see the benefit of these initiatives. Community sees the school as 'over there'; getting the community to see how what the school district is doing benefits them (community education components)

Question 4 What do you see as the role of the school district in moving Stoughton toward being a more sustainable community?

- Schools can be the lead (the engine); students/teachers move the engine forward by educating the students. This takes time.
 - How do you maintain the momentum/traction and keep it moving forward?
 - Important to incorporate this into the curriculum, make it grow, even with new people coming in (e.g. students moving on and up)
 - Tough to keep momentum forward
 - City can 'drive' with them
 - Schools touch the community everyday
- How do you operationalize the system? So that what is taught then becomes the norm
 - Systemic response so that, down the road, this is part of the community system.
 - How to motivate people within the school system? sustain this through systems, so that it continues
- Outreach to the community: could the school system develop metrics, and then show this to the community. "Oh wow, the District is doing this..."
- Schools have visibility. People have family members in the schools; people see what is happening through their students. If sustainability is happening in the schools, then it becomes normalized in households (kind of like a media outlet)
- Example of community members collaborating in closed loop systems: Trees cutting; materials used in pottery kiln. Trees Used in community center. Closed loop recycling. Individuals in the community feel this impact.
- Compost. If schools generate compost, and then this is used in gardens, it becomes a measurable impact. People see the benefit; it is of help to them. They can then appreciate it.(supporting a closed loop system)

Question 5 How might the City, the County, or other entities (such as nonprofit organizations) help the school district accelerate sustainability efforts?

- Scale up notion of closed loop systems
- Putting systems in place for the initiative to be sustained (e.g., compost buckets; how is it collected, where does it go?)
 - People who are in the schools (students) move on; how do you make the system self-perpetuating so that every student is doing it, as a matter of practice
 - Systems: e.g. school gardens at every school; composting at every school

- City is invested in creating new green spaces, trails, etc. > have these used by school district.
- Achilles heel: getting the idea into an action plan that lives in systems beyond the individual
 - First steps: Research places that have done this already and see how it is done; see if it is appropriate to Stoughton schools.
 - Determine how much these projects cost.
 - Start with small action projects that a group has identified as a priority, and then replicate these.
- City/Counties: educate people to live small; sustainable living
 - There are communities around the nation that have created shared living communal spaces;
 - Planning issue – acceptance of a different way of living (American spread versus European style of living). Need to have an attitude shift of what is possible & preferred.
 - Communities that plan for smaller living will move forward. (planned communities with city center, villages on outskirts, connected by paths to amenities)
- Transportation: big opportunity for the City to take a lead role in supporting schools on transportation initiatives.
 - Cmte has talked about Main street trolley; bike friendly connections; bike friendly public transport.
 - River Bluff – traffic to Main /street is a mess.
- City Infrastructure: more bike lanes needed.
 - Students don't have drivers licenses because DMV has been closed (pandemic, costs, etc.); as such, students have difficulty getting around to school and jobs. Lots of traffic during drop off and pick up; Lean into this with the city.
 - After school - Kids on sidewalk; cars blasting through. Safety issue.
 - Planning aspect for safety; moving students from one side of town to other sides of town (they don't have this now). Students can't get around.
 - Need connections. Transportation for summer school, work, etc.
- Partnerships:
 - UW: autonomous vehicles
 - B-cycle
 - Bike give-away programs: students would benefit from access to bikes:
 - Sandhill has partnered with Trek to fix up bikes; bike rodeo (bike maintenance); Younger kids. Have cash out cards; could access bikes with this card

Other Ideas on partnerships, opportunities, initiatives:

- Need information on grants that are available; who to reach out to (one central clearing house for grant opportunities). Contact for information. They don't even know what is out there. Steve forwards info from Kathy Kuntz (Dane County Office of Energy & Climate Change)
 - Cheat sheet on who do you go to for guidance on grants
- Graduate students at UW who can come into the school district to provide information about areas of impact
- Learning what other schools/entities have done: who is the correct contact person? What would learning about it look like?
 - Physical plant
 - Moving students through system of knowledge: Instruction Leads

- Broad issues: Superintendent
- New construction can be Lead certified (from the ground up); schools that are retrofitting.
- Partnership with Findorff and EUA > on capital improvement projects
- Partnership with CSA farms; hooking that into education system. Bring them into the lunchroom. "Harvest of the Month"

Question 6 Of all the initiatives and goals we've discussed, what seems most important? What seems possible?

- Energy consumption throughout the District (referendum moved it forward); everything. Going green.
- Remodel/build: look at energy consumption
- Transportation: public transportation is critical. Move students; also move people to Madison
- Transportation. Round-abouts . They added sidewalks and flashing crosswalks. Makes the community more walkable. Partnerships with city/state on transportation. Improve bike lanes
- Improve ability to walk and bike.
- Increase access for people to get across the city
- Making clear high priority items; providing the metrics to know how we are doing,
- No bike trail from Stoughton out to the bike network in Madison and beyond (Capital City Trail). This is in the works, and is out a ways (this happens through the County)
- Food waste (something we could tackle as a district) especially as we are reconstructing cafeterias
 - Educate on the reduction of food waste
 - Great food vendor; willing to work with the District on a lot of things
- Transportation: most impactful
- Reduction of food waste: most doable
- Actionable: composting , food waste
- Actionable: improving access to green space; having school areas be a place to walk/hike outdoors. (gardens, hiking areas)

Manufacturing & Industry Notes

May 1, 2023

Facilitator: Michelle Probst (Dane County Extension)

Note-taker: Sharon Lezberg (Dane County Extension)

Companies that participated in the focus group

- **Stoughton Health/Hospital**
- **Emmi Roth** cheese company
- **Emmi Roth** packaging facility in Stoughton

Question 1 What is your business/industry currently doing with regard to sustainability practices within your firm (e.g., waste management, air quality, water quality, recycling, materials sourcing, energy conservation, transportation efficiency) ?

Emmi Roth:

- They are part of a few industry wide groups (cheese manufacturing).
- They have a number of goals: water, waste, recyclable packaging, reducing emissions, more sustainable agriculture industry, employees, community outreach
- They are reaching many of their goals:
 - They have cut their water use in half since 2019.
 - Energy: Trying to be net zero by 2050 (as is the industry)
- Challenge
 - They don't own farms; they buy from coops. This represents a barrier
 - To support the industry, they are part of organizations. Farmers for Sustainable food, sustainability alliance, Dairy producers
 - To have more influence: project through the Innovation Center about soil health. They are helping Farmers to become more sustainable through soil practices.

Stoughton Health/Hospital:

- Project planning to expand facility by 50,000 square feet
- New facility will have capacity for solar power: will reduce energy costs by 30% - part of roof installation with new building
- Replacing interior lighting with LED

Edgerton Hospital (an example) - new hospital has entirely geothermal heating.

Stoughton is in a different situation. Campus built over time, with additions.

Question 2 What initiatives has your business/industry taken that you are particularly proud of?

Stoughton Hospital: they haven't yet been leading on this, but some individuals have passion to move it forward.

- They put 4 EV chargers for cars

Future goals:

- Would be most proud of having an organization goal (target)
- Microgrids!! They have a lot of backup generators. These are just used to test the generator and back it up. But would like to look into microgrids.

Q: What are the reasons that there is not an organizational goal?

- They have been totally focused on covid. The focus has been on throughput to get people out of ER and into regular beds - this has been a huge challenge. They just took off their masks.
- Excited to have 'a new day' where they can address sustainability.

Emmi Roth:

- The company has been very mindful of recyclability of products, especially in planning for the new facility in Stoughton
 - Recycling plastic cover on inputs for products
- Developing a facility to accommodate mixed load: dock open for mixed recyclables (the other plants are older and don't have that)
- Baler coming. Keeping stuff out of trash compactor
- Looking at recyclers for waste cheese (this has been a challenge). Emmi Roth is looking into what to do there. FSMA rules prohibit giving it to animals. Keeping waste stream out of landfill; design for this.
- Organization is considering sustainability in decision-making process and part of culture. There are individuals who are climate/sustainability champions.
- Struggle to find the ROI; this puts a hamper on their ability to move forward
 - Geothermal was from Edgerton facility model; used this model to determine if they could do it in their plant > high price tag
- Stoughton facility: will have native plants around facility; because it is the right thing to do; based on Oak Savanna
- Talking about sustainability a lot in the industry; they are aware of the need

Q: You mentioned that the company has met goals for reducing water use in cheese production. How did you do that?

- In 2019 they worked on reducing water use in production facilities. They knew it was low-hanging fruit. Took care of leaks in the pipes.
- They have to run water through the system to keep it cool; they implemented a way to recycle that water. Systems thinking, circularity

Parent company Emmi Group: Largest cheese processor in Switzerland. They were told to implement sustainability practices in their plants. They were provided with tools to do this.

- Consumer led as well, in a way
- Takes off in the culture of the organization; there are levers.
 - Green teams in all the facilities; to help with the more tactical issues. Managers are not the only ones who are passionate about sustainability; they have been making sure that this priority permeates through every level of the organization. More consistent conversation.
 - Purposeful conversation and a lot of luck.

Q: Is this possible [purposeful focus on sustainability] within the healthcare industry?

- yes, of course; it just has to come up as a priority. They had a green team 10 years ago. It wasn't seen as a priority
- Could be an initiative in the future (having a sustainability team/green team)
- The constant pressure of ROI is huge
- Covid: had to move to throw-aways
 - \$90,000 investment for biodegradable materials (straws, plates, etc)
 - Doesn't work well in health care - quirky nuances
- Supportive implementation team and BOD - this moves them

- Public interest is very important; it moves the industry
- It's not going to be solved within healthcare alone; it will be solved in conversation with other industries so that they can see some new ideas/innovation

Question 3 Where do you see additional possibilities for incorporating sustainability practices in your business/industry?

- Process innovations?
- Monitoring/tracking resource use and waste management?
- Product innovations?

[addressed above]

Question 4 Does your industry/business have sustainability goals? Who sets them?

- Are there 'champions' in your industry/business who are leading efforts to incorporate sustainability practices?
- If you do not have sustainability goals, what might be the reasons that these are not included in your business planning?

[addressed above]

Question 5 What are the barriers to achieving your sustainability goals?

- Money. Capital
- The industry wants to move forward.
- The ROI is so important - tech is moving forward.
 - The ROI is in 20 to 30 years for many innovations
 - Need adjustment in thinking about ROI
- Plant is built to have solar (in the future), but it isn't a viable option > they can't make their money back.
- Education [of personnel in the industry]. Healthcare is an island. There is no focus on sustainability in the field.
- Hospitals, as they are being built, there are things that they can do. Having the inventory of what is in front of you (what is possible, what is evolving). What industries have something similar that you can benefit from.
 - E.g. culinary: if you are feeding staff, people [you can get ideas from other facilities that feed people]
 - What is the thing that most people have? Start there and then have conversations
 - Personal interest
- Education on emerging technologies
- Solar: Used to be a long-term ROI; they got it down to 11 years ROI. They may even be able to get a grant to chop it down to 3 years. (Grant from FOE)
- Gunderson Hospital in LaCrosse: they partnered with Organic Valley to put up wind turbines. Shared costs. Epic has also invested in wind turbines (but had to go outside of the County).
 - Turbines: There are other designs; European design for smaller model situated on the side of buildings.
- Partnerships: having industries come together is key - working together.

- Find solutions, locations, creative collaborations

Emmy Roth: There's thousands of pounds of cheese by-product waste each month in the manufacturing facility. They have trouble finding a home (or other purpose) for this waste. Food waste is a huge climate change issue. Can we do some of this as a community - compost or digest this waste? [rather than relying on the industry alone to find the solution]

Plant Manager perspective: you have to come up with creative solutions and be committed.

- Set the tone with employees right off the bat. This will be in the orientation; they will have a committee; they will challenge people to come up with ideas. This is possible with a new plant [harder to do with established plants that already have patterns of practice]
- They have purchased high tech equipment that reduces waste (trim); investment (cutters from Germany)
- With regard to ROI: we need to shift to long-term thinking (rather than short term ROI) – there's a difference in thinking between 5 yrs. and 20 years.

Question 6 How might the City, the County, or other entities help overcome these barriers in order that you could reach your goals

- Increasing renewables [energy] in the available mix. Being able to source renewable energy locally (they are at 21%).
- Waste infrastructure that allows recycling of plastic (wrap); and also to find a place to put food waste that is not landfill.
- Could the city offer a course for interested businesses on how to write your first sustainability plan?
- Coming together; sitting around a table. Talking about the opportunities.
- Share innovative practices that are happening locally or beyond. Informal time to talk with one another. Steps between here and there.
- Surfacing resources. Would take them a long way. [a single, up-to-date, reliable resource web site]
- There are leaders who can be showcased (LaCross Gunderson: still a unicorn in the industry). None of it got traction here.
- Get people together in a room to talk about shared interests and develop partnerships.
- Sustain Dane has a great focus and lots of information seminars
- Technology (Zoom) makes it convenient to do things fast. It is a way to get started. Schedule meetings for people to get together. Frequency and venue get determined from that.
- Stoughton: there is investment on the River Front; businesses, etc.; [get shared commitment from these]

Q: is there a benefit to bringing together small businesses and larger entities?

- They are very different, but there is opportunity depending on what Stoughton does (e.g. housing, waterfront); that changes the business environment. Small businesses interested in the concept of sustainability can emphasize what the next thing they are skating towards is.

Additional comments/suggestions from participants:

- Does Dane County do local podcasts? How to grow the conversation? Emphasizing education component. Local points.
- Education within the community: keep doing this. Expand the dialogue.
- For businesses: education around technology and actionable insights. Often people go to conferences and they hear the same thing all the time.
- Have people from energy sector and municipalities come talk with them.
- Get people in front of you where there can be follow-up and get over barriers - actionable.
- Celebrate the small wins. Some of it is too huge. What can you do today and tomorrow? Get people excited about moving toward more sustainability; get the minds thinking forward.

Emmi Roth is holding a Sustainability day (for employees): Attendees can win an electric bicycle or lawnmower. Provide an idea of how to make your facility more sustainable. Little things that get people thinking about it. Need to celebrate smaller wins.

- For employees, community people: Getting ideas together; collaboration. Do something about it, rather than just talking about it.

Participant Questions/comments:

- Will the sustainability report identify sustainability goals for the community? Will they be setting up goals for companies, businesses? Or identifying indicators of success linking to business and industry. Providing a framework for others to set goals.
- For the committee to have power to support change in business and industry sector; perhaps they can move to the Chamber of Commerce (away from City) to have more umpf.
- Committee can inspire and educate.
- Shared resources - Podcasts: A Matter of Degrees; Econtalk (not always climate-related, but they have some episodes on the topic); Climate of Change

Developer Focus Group

May 2, 2023

Facilitator: Sharon Lezberg

Recorder: Michelle Probst and Olivia Kovacs

Sustainability Committee Member: Scott Taylor

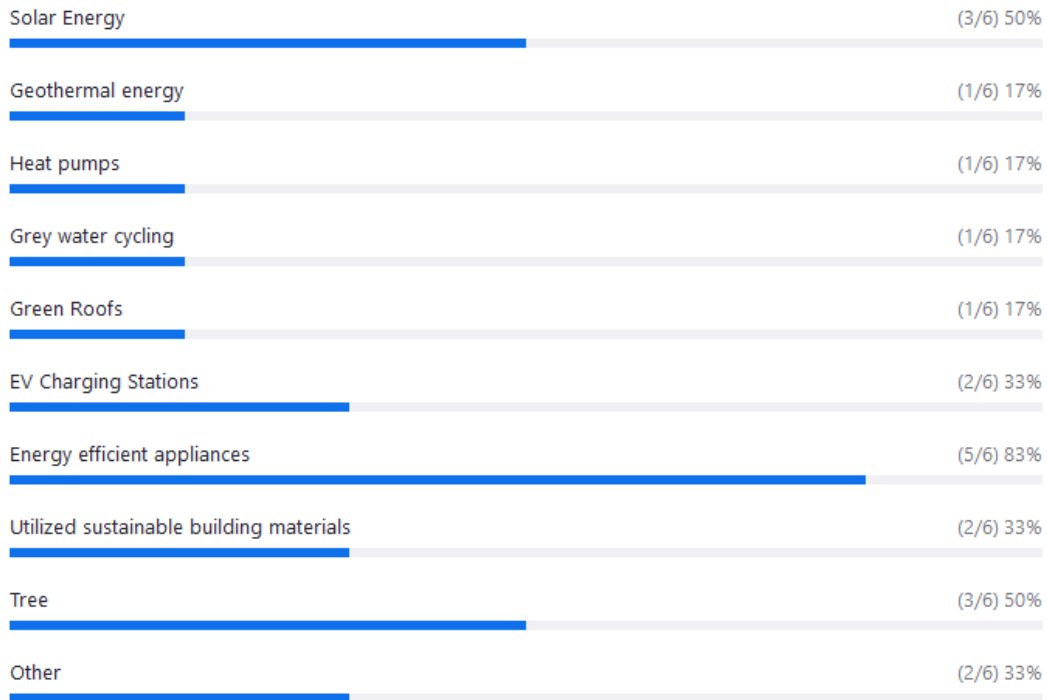
Participants included representatives of local developers and members of the Redevelopment Authority

Attendees: Friede Associates (general contractor business)
Stoughton Senior Center
Stoughton Redevelopment Authority
Stoughton Trailers and Holding.
Forward Development
Eldon Homes

Question 1 What is your firm currently doing to advance sustainability practices in your housing/facility developments? *Discussion on poll question:*

1. Has your firm implemented any of the following in your housing/facility developments to advance sustainability? (check all that apply) (Multiple Choice) *

6/6 (100%) answered



Question 2 What sustainability initiatives within your developments has your firm taken that you are particularly proud of?

- Worked with a third party to conduct energy audits
- Installing connectors and uniform connections for charging. There are issues because there are several connectors and it's hard to unify our buildings and wiring.
- We are still looking to get in with the City of Stoughton. Outside of our manufacturing settings we have not implemented any yet.
- As a commercial contractor, they've done commercial grey water, geothermal. There is the market to plan for and develop for EV and solar charging.
- Redevelopment of the waterfront property included solar panels for lighting. EV charging ready for underground garages. EV isn't as sustainable as we'd like it be. Tree plantings will be done in the area. We haven't looked into building materials just yet.
- Conservation with lighting and LEDs. In collaboration with Lions club, we've collected plastic bags, and then furniture is created for us.
- From a Community perspective—would love to see different things be available to citizen to help them be more involved in sustainability. And include older generations in programs. Programs and sustainable practices might not be available to older generations financially.
- Green roofs are most marketable and what we are proud of.
- Energy efficient appliances are the most economical. We update the HVAC to support it, and appliances come into it.
- Street trees are always great to incorporate and make a neighborhood look more polished.

Question 3 Where do you see additional possibilities for incorporating sustainability practices in your developments?: Process innovations?-Monitoring/tracking systems?-Product innovations?

- Customer demand—Solar [panels] something people are looking into very early in the process. And there are a few projects in the area taking advantage of it.
- Energy efficient appliances are pretty much a must at this point. The economics work out, and people are looking for it. Changing perspectives on thinking more long term investment
- Future initiatives— green field projects. Size of city of streets, reducing the amount of pavement, but not the right of way. Streets infrastructure has gone up immensely. Focus street parking in certain areas, less pavement, less stormwater runoff. Can save costs along with environmental benefits.
- Development aspect needs to be reduced. They are making streets wider and it's not a sustainable design.
- Something else we are putting in place we are trying to engineer our homes to reduce the amount of lumber loss. We monitor our waste and work with engineers to reduce work waste. This is more environmentally friendly but also reduces costs and reduces landfill waste.
- Heat pumps—Affordability is difficult on these products. If there was a coop buying opportunity that would help cut costs.

- Huge growth premanufacturing with all of our wood systems. We build a whole house, and have it be built in one place, then bring it out to the job site. We can put it onsite, and assemble it within 2 days.
 - The design process is key to have the manufacturer involved to talk about the site and any challenges to work through any deficiencies in the system.

Question 4 Does your firm have sustainability goals that you are striving for in future developments? Who sets them?

- More driven by energy efficiency, it really depends on the product. High end homes have more opportunities. We try and get as close to zero as possible, but it depends on the product. That is the long term goal: it takes a little bit more time and streamlining to get there.
- Commercial projects, you are not marketing to the end user, but the contractor. Our goals are from the customer and projects rather than our business. Utilizing sustainable practices to take you beyond code is always a great thing. We might have to take on those costs [for sustainable practices] ourselves can be a challenge, so as a younger firm we don't have that capital to take on
- We have to be aware of all the practices and resources out there to show the client. We are great at recycling and upgrading windows / cabinetry /supplies to keep things from going to landfills. From a corporate standpoint, we work with Habitat for Humanity on getting new efficient windows and appliances. We also work hard to locally source our materials to take advantage of local supplies.
- Project management has sustainability standards in place that are written, but this is a growing area and ever changing, so we have to keep up with new products. This wasn't a thing people always were asking about but the market place is always evolving.
- Any way we can be efficient with sizing, we are using less materials and then less energy in the construction and use of the building.
- Any time we build a home, we do have standards, we continually look at materials and review our strategies and product lines. We like to source our materials locally.
- Every time a development request is put in place, we review all the standards. It has become the norm of trying to look more sustainable practices and efficiency as long as the cost is there. The city certainly has some processes in line and is developing more. Using those systems to reduce cost is the main game

Question 5 What are the barriers to achieving your sustainability goals?

- Money, cost is the biggest barrier for individuals. It would be great to have resources to make their own home more sustainable.
- It's not just ROI, you have to look into your intended purpose. We have a corporate office, have developed sustainability goals, and it is part of a carbon footprint and looking long term. Thinking about who we are serving, and what is important to them for sustainability. Then maybe you are willing to take the risk.
- Costs, who can afford the product. It is hard for older folks to afford these products. Focus on Energy is a great program to utilize. We could do something similar to this on a community level to help people afford some of these products.
- Mindset has to change. Developer has everything dumped on them, 'Now go do it' and the developer has to make it work and also ensure that the end user still wants to buy it. How can we get private and public money working together to get the best product out

there and available to people. Is there a way to build a system that we can build bike and pedestrian opportunities and move away from the cars? Cooperation between private and city to identify the common goals around sustainability.

- Park fees have drastically increased across the area, specifically in Stoughton and those costs have to be incorporated into the project
- We should be sharing the overall cost of projects—all of the things beyond the materials. Park and other fees can add significantly to a project. While those fees are applied, we also have to look at how we market Stoughton, and if there are incentives that the city and developers can work together.
- We should be showcasing other ways that Stoughton can be marketable. Park fees may be high, but there are other benefits to developing in Stoughton.

Question 6 What can the City do to help you grow/promote your business as a sustainability leader? (awards, publicity, referral, incentives, etc.)

- Collaboration with the City is super important—how can we grow Stoughton. Really community focused Sytende Mai has an opportunity to market our products. We are also working with Stoughton Trailers to show what we can do and market the community as a whole. It's a great community with great trails, resources, etc. How can we reduce engineering fees?
- Incentives are always helpful. Set benchmarks to make it more affordable and then accomplish goals. PACE has a lot of opportunities.
- We don't necessarily know what the City wants. What are their goals and how do we fit into that goal? There seems to be a little uncertainty as to what's important and what we should be planning for. Better communication to help plan for sustainability goals would be great.
- Transparency from the City on goals. Everybody be open and transparent about what we are trying to achieve. It might not always be focused on ROI. Someone is able to go a bit further when we know the motivations of the community. The City has a tendency to form a process, but it might not be set in stone. There are reasons for the process, and we should be able to talk about them in an open forum and have discussions based around everyone's needs.
- Consistency is also needed. People don't mind following rules, they just want to know that they will still be rules and everyone must follow them. Where can we support development from a land perspective—sometimes commercial is not an option, sometimes no housing.
- We should be looking at a higher density of housing. And understand where the city should be using their resources to support development. Also support the infrastructure to support new developments.
- Incentives are always helpful. Awards or shout outs on social media are super helpful.

Environmental Organizations Focus Group Notes

5/3/2023

Facilitator: Michelle Probst (Dane County Extension)

Note-takers: Sharon Lezberg (Dane County Extension) & Olivia Kovacs (Extension)

Stoughton Sustainability Committee Representative: Ben Heili

Organizations that participated in the focus group:

- Sustainable Stoughton
- Rock River Coalition
- Friends of Lake Kegonsa (FOLKS)
- Madison Area Municipal Stormwater Partnership and Dane County Land and Water Resources Dept.
- Sustain Dane

Question 1 What are the current efforts of your organization to promote sustainability in Stoughton?

FOLKS: not doing anything specifically within city limits of Stoughton. They work with residents who live around Lake Kegonsa – they have Stoughton addresses but are in Pleasant Springs or Dunn. The organization focuses on education programs, speaker events, rain barrel program; planting with Plant Dane, workshops on growing native plants, exchange and tour in June (tour of people planting natives, doing sustainability. 450 person membership; ~ 100 people show up for events. The impact is from neighbors see what is happening around the lake. They are talking with Clean Lakes Alliance about the reward/acknowledgement system (recognition for those whose efforts promote sustainability).

Sustainable Stoughton: current focus is on encouraging pollinators by promoting backyard refuges for animals, birds, and insects. They've been bringing in speakers to talk about this. Trying to have residents plant native plants in backyards. Book club on "Nature's Best Hope" by Doug Homme (which promotes creating a backyard national park extending across people's backyards).

MAMSWaP: Program works with over 21 communities across Dane County (those who are part of [MAMSWaP](#), the Madison Area Municipal Stormwater Partnership) on stormwater education and outreach. [The goal is to provide community outreach and education to reduce adverse impacts of water quality in lakes and streams from urban sources of runoff.] Projects include storm drain program (Stoughton has signed on to the 'adopt a storm drain' program; leaf free streets, rain gardens, demonstration gardens, and residential gardens. They are hoping to do a tour of natural landscapes to give people ideas and inspire people. They also have rain barrel programs.

Sustain Dane: planning for their 'All around Dane County series' in Stoughton. They go outside of Madison; gather stories about sustainability and share info with each other. the City of

Stoughton joined as a member of Sustain Dane, so they have access to all of their sustainability programs. Stoughton Sustainability Committee members have attended 'accelerate sustainability' workshops.

Rock River Coalition: This organization does work similar to some of the other groups and is happy to do things in Stoughton, such as rain barrel workshops, native planting. They don't focus as much in Dane County. Dane is in the Rock River basin, but other Counties in the basin have fewer resources. Other programs include:

- Streamwater monitoring with WAV program (UW Extension/DNR). Water quality data available through website or DNR database
- Outreach and education around water/stormwater
- Invasive species work partnerships in Dane County
- Summary of their projects: Aquatic invasive species, stormwater, streamwater monitoring; outreach & education; recreation

Question 2 What are the barriers for your organization in promoting sustainability in Stoughton?

- Reaching the right people to spread the word, especially in terms of social media outreach.
- Lack of education [of people in the community]. People don't understand why certain things are being done - e.g., why native plants are being planted in parks; why invasive species are being taken out.
- Time. People don't show up. People are strapped with so many different things. Getting people to come to events is a big deal.

Question 3 What opportunities do you see for nonprofit and community organizations to work together to advance sustainability in the community?

- Coordination: there are many organizations doing the same thing. Native plantings, getting the word out. Maybe we all need to coordinate; work together to get more native plants on the landscape in a short period of time. Coordinate promotion and organizing.
- Spreading the word about various programs that different organizations are doing. Let's not reinvent the wheel; let's be spokes.
- Food scrap collection as an opportunity. Sustain Dane collects food scraps at farmers' markets and brings this to a farm managed by Neighborhood Food Solutions for composting. It would be possible to do a program in Stoughton to collect food scraps at the Stoughton farmers markets and bring them to a local farm for composting.
Note that Stoughton Public Works Department is thinking of composting. There are two farmers markets in Stoughton.
- More diverse and native tree populations in city property
- Rain Barrels in public property as education
- Signage so that people know what their tax dollars are supporting

- Storm Water Education Program is starting work to put rain gardens and native planting demonstration plots on public property (city buildings). These small plot gardens would capture the attention of homeowners and be replicable. 'Downspout gardening' (less work than a rain garden; plant native plants near a downspout). Using shorter species; providing signage as education/demo. Supply homeowners with a starter kit to make it replicable. Target audience is residents. Municipalities have rain-gardens (staff maintain them) - but these are large scale. Hard for homeowners to make the connection between their own space and the demo garden.

Question 4 What city-initiated sustainability efforts have you seen in other communities that you would recommend?

- Stoughton Utilities, renew WI > talking about community solar buying collaborative.
- City (Stoughton) is working on cleaning up parks and river
- Stoughton is trying to get more community involvement in renewable energy; they need help to facilitate this effort
- In Watertown they are putting in permeable pavers in public parking lots and planting native plants along streams.
- Sustain Dane has a partnership with the City of Madison for the 'Efficiency Navigator Program.' This program supports energy efficiency into small and medium sized housing to reduce energy costs (can be extended to other communities but needs outside funding source).
- Project Home: works with low-income households and beyond. They do an energy audit of your home. They cover the cost of improvements for low income, or sliding scale. Help you make your home more energy efficient through upgrades. The program operates in Dane and Green Counties.

Question 5 What do you see as your role in implementing the Stoughton Sustainability plan?

Sustainable Stoughton: Sustainable Stoughton can educate the community beyond what the committee can do. Education and promotion of sustainability is their charge.

FOLKS: They intend to share resources with people in the community; the more people who are involved, the more these ideas spread.

RRC: Happy to share resources; give presentations; help with projects. They try to roam around the basin.

Extra Question 5.1: Stoughton is a municipality and operates differently than nonprofits. How do you feel that nonprofit work intersects with the government sector? How do government entities and nonprofits connect and collaborate?

Rock River Coalition: Municipalities will reach out to them because they don't have outreach staff. The community does not have the internal capacity to take care of permits, etc.

Municipality will sub-contract with them, or they will get grant \$ to do it. The municipality doesn't have a staff person to do the work.

FOLKS: as a nonprofit, they work with everyone; RRC on water quality; work with MAMSWAP, Plant Dane , etc. Dane County Parks and Water. It is amazing how much help they get. Very responsive.

Sustainable Stoughton: Works in collaboration with municipalities. Forums/big events - they partner with Stoughton utilities, who provided funding and brought in speakers and people with electric vehicles. Previously they did research for the municipality (River Front Development); they looked at other communities and gave a presentation to the RDA. Initially, one of the big efforts was to do IPM in the parks and schools, public green space; educating the public; involved UW researchers to do research on the ball fields about different types of maintenance of grass. This then folded into new city policy.

Question 6 What support would you like to see from the City, the school district, or other entities??

- The people who are here on this call provide wonderful resources. County supplies the funding. The support and the resources are wonderful.
- Continued collaboration and openness for new ideas. Mayor has been attending Sustain Dane Programs. Getting City Council open to these ideas . Putting the sustainability goals forward. City and other entities are helping with big events. Giving presentations and sharing what they are doing with regards to sustainability. Giving parks, public works, etc. a platform.
- City, school, etc. are great places for demonstration projects. If the municipality provides space for workshops, education programs, that is helpful.
- Showcase successes: Get the word out with stories that get people thinking about what they can do. Break the issues down to bite sized pieces so that efforts don't feel so overwhelming.
- Communications. It would be good to get more press for what they are doing so that the general public can learn about these efforts.
- Sustainable Stoughton is invited to write an article for the City's Hub Spot every 6 weeks. They will run out of ideas and welcome other groups (those present in the focus group) to tell their own stories. Suggestion that they can 'regurgitate' stories from other organizations in their Hub spot. [Contact Sustainable Stoughton](#)
- Dream of Sustainable Stoughton: have a Sustainability Fair at one of the parks.

Community Anchor Institution Focus Group Notes May 2, 2023

Facilitator: Sharon Lezberg, Dane County Extension
Recorder: Michelle Probst, Dane County Extension
Sustainability Committee member: Donelle Scaffidi

Organizations that participated in the focus group:

- Stoughton Innovation Center
- Stoughton Downtown Business Association
- Stoughton Opera House
- Mayor Tim Swadley

Question 1 What are current efforts within your organization to move toward sustainable operations?

Stoughton Opera House

- Operations—bringing in consumables that can be recycled or composted, organic and local. The green room is an oasis for artists, so we offer good food for people and make it comfortable for them and have artists want to come back to the opera house. It's a little unknown if recycling actually gets recycled. Choose paper rather than styrofoam.
- Slipstream came through the building to understand efficiency opportunities. The lighting could be more efficient, but we want to keep the integrity of the building. The friends group is interested in fundraising towards more sustainable opportunities like the lightning. We've had discussion about solar, but are unsure about the roof space, but could utilize the fire house. We have unique challenges with a historic building.

Downtown Business Assn

- General philosophy—to have a product that has a story behind it. Try to have recyclable and local products as much as possible. This is really key to our local businesses. A lot of fundraising for Ukraine, and discussions around Juneteeth celebrations. Paper straws and compostable containers—how do we incentivize this? Share that information with people about how we are supporting initiatives.
- Number of buildings downtown need help, and it would be helpful to keep the ownership local. It is difficult for a small business to be able to afford energy efficient buildings. Property keeps going up in price.

Stoughton Innovation Center

- The values of sustainability are embedded in our organization, nothing explicitly stated of how that operationalizes. Convening groups in Stoughton that have been working with other entities who work with UW-Madison students, and being an organization that can help implement what comes out of these reports that students have been working on. Students are working with the innovation center, RDA, and the sustainability committee.
- Nuclear fusion research at UW, and understanding if that could be a long term goal for Stoughton. The innovation center wants to be a hub that can support new ideas and develop projects that can promote sustainability.
- Working to understand IRA money and what that means for clean energy and with small businesses.
- Revolving loan funds—city council put funding towards this. The idea is to couple this money with IRA funding to invest in clean energy.
- The innovation center will hope to be a learning hub, and one of those 'hubs' will be sustainability to learn about IRA.

Question 2 Where do you see additional possibilities for incorporating sustainability practices in your organization and/or events that you sponsor?

- Lots of food at events—how can we reduce food waste at these events?
- There are companies who do food waste collection, but a lot of them don't serve Stoughton.
- Someone at Promega is trying to collect food waste and the innovation center could be working on how to bring that idea to Stoughton.
- The lions club collects plastic bags and makes them into benches.
- Packaging is our biggest challenge. It would be great to have a boxing reuse program where people can donate boxes to other organizations for use.

Question 3 For umbrella organizations: In what ways is sustainability discussed within your membership and in your organization??

- Membership primarily focuses on music. There is so much generosity around the opera house operational and in really good shape.
- There's a historic component to Stoughton, and so it's discussing how we can keep that historic identity and market it. Utilizing more digital marketing rather than paper. These spaces also serve as a community space. Small businesses sell an experience more so than a product.
- Many patrons would come to get tickets right away, and the pandemic made people do more online sales, which reduces driving. Pandemic taught people how to utilize technology services.

Question 4 What are the barriers to advancing sustainability within your organization??

- Waste—do we know where our waste is going?
- There has been some work done to understand how downtown can be better utilized, it's been difficult to get anyone to utilize these spaces. It is more money to retrofit an area vs just building brand new. This is also an issue of land use—if we keep building out, we are contributing to urban sprawl.
- TIFF funding - consider how to incorporate sustainability. This creates a lot of opportunities.
- Waterfront development has been difficult with other regulations on what can be done. The regulations make it difficult to retrofit buildings. Specifically with buildings close to the water. We can only invest 50% of the worth of the building.
- For small businesses it is difficult to have the capacity to focus on sustainability. It is the opposite with big corporations, but it's hard to get things done to know who to contact at big businesses.
- Is there an opportunity to collaborate on shared resources? This happened in the pandemic, the restaurants worked with each other to get food supplies. Can merchants do this?
- Start with education around sustainability—define sustainability
- Sharing the ROI on products. Choosing organic is more expensive, so how can we communicate the value even though it's a higher cost?

- Can we bulk purchase compostable to-go containers that are Stoughton branded? Forever wear–reusable to go containers. A downtown business or the opera house could utilize this.
- Carbon emissions reduction
 - How do I do this as a small business? On a personal level, I know the practices, but what can my business do?
 - Heat pumps have a lot of energy efficiency possibilities.
 - Could someone give the exact steps, the cost, what needs to get done
 - Real estate gives out a preferred list of contractors, this could be done for energy efficiency.
 - Laying out the opportunities for businesses would be helpful

Question 5 What do you see as the role of your institution/organization in promoting sustainability in Stoughton?

- We have a public establishment—we can make things visible for the community
- It would be great to have a bullet point flier of what we did for sustainability in Stoughton to hand out to customers. It would be great to be given a directive. It would be great to help codify resources and help lift up other businesses. We want people to say, ‘Have you been to Stoughton? It’s great!’
- Innovation is to help the City be more sustainable, and make it easy.
- The role for the city is the leadership and visionary role. The city has a lot of expertise to put together action and provide resources and education to bring people together. We need to bring in people more broadly through the process and bring in benchmarks and goals that we should work towards. This plan needs to be something that can be handed off.

Question 6 How might the City, the County, or other entities (such as nonprofit organizations, e.g., the Innovation Center, Sustainable Stoughton...) help your organization accelerate sustainability efforts?

- Group purchasing for compostable boxes that are Stoughton Branded, then innovation center does the composting
- Making it easier to deal with food waste.
- Knowing what is out there, what exists, what opportunities are available. How the innovation center can help fill those needs.
- Energy, central information resource. How it can be done financially and how we change the resources. And how we can save money in the long run, especially focusing on older buildings.
- In the future for events:
 - Zero waste events and getting volunteers to help separate garbage
 - EV Charging stations

Which department do you work for?	Do you think your department currently prioritizes sustainability?	Please elaborate on how your department prioritizes sustainability and if there is anything you wish you could change about its role in decision making.	What strategies or ideas do you have for future implementation of sustainability in your department?	What do you consider to be the least sustainable practice of your department?	What specific metrics do you currently use to measure your success or implementation of sustainability?	Which barriers prevent your department from making sustainable choices and advancing sustainability?	Please elaborate on which barriers are the most limiting for your department and why.	What are your current avenues for outreach to advance sustainability?	What capacity does your department have to increase educational outreach? Where do you need support?
Human Resources & Risk Management	No	We would embrace being more sustainable, given the opportunity.	Paperless work environment, onboarding via online software, remote work allows for less use of resources such as lighting, heat, air conditioning, onsite resources and air pollution through driving.	probably the software needed to go paperless could be costly.	None	Funding, Staff Time, Technology	Staff Time		
Police Department	Yes	We have Hybrid vehicles	Get electric vehicles	Gas	Carbon footprint	Funding			
Mayor	Yes	Reviews opportunities at budget time. Pursues grants. Works with local businesses.	More renewable energy, IRA and ARPA funds.	Could always use less paper.	Rely on reports from department heads.	Funding, Staff Time	We do not have a Sustainability Coordinator. Traditionally rely on 12-year payback model.	Sustain Dane, Dane County, Social Media, trade organizations.	Not much. Public education.
		Stormwater Management - Our department manages the City's stormwater system and the associated permit that is issued by the DNR. The City strives to provide quality management of surface water through various programs: illicit discharge inspections, erosion control inspections, stormwater management regulations, information and education materials, street sweeping, leaf pickup, etc. City Buildings - upgrading HVAC systems to higher efficiencies at time of replacement; Electronic programming for HVAC systems based on occupancy; For new City buildings, use of durable building materials, use of natural light, solar(Public Works and Nordic Ridge Park), water conserving plumbing fixtures, efficient lighting, quality windows, etc. Installation of EV charging Station at City Hall Parking Lot when it was resurfaced. Planning and Zoning - Providing a range of housing stock with attention to overall density to minimize excess greenfield development. Encourage redevelopment. New development regulations that require street tree planting. Provide street right-of-way widths to accommodate anticipated users (vehicles, bicycles, and pedestrians) but not excessive. Provide a variety of open spaces with various vegetation cover (wooded, grass, native, etc.). City Zoning regulations have been modified to allow the keeping of chickens and honey bees. As a department that plays an integral role in Economic Development, we help to promote quality projects that are environmentally conscience such as EMMI Roth and Shinobec (produces aluminum framing for solar arrays). Consider friendly regulations to accommodate solar installations. Office Administration - Our department has implemented an online permitting process to minimize paper submittals, storage and travel. Most meetings are now conducted with a Hybrid component that can minimize travel.							
Planning & Development	Yes	Landmarks Commission -As staff to the Commission we help to promote and process grants that support the sustainability of our Historic Downtown District.	Evaluate City Building and lands for possible Solar generation. Encourage EV ready construction practices. Add a Rain Garden for environmental education.	Use of gas powered vehicles to conduct building and zoning inspections.	We don't use a metric overall. However, for replacement of building heating and cooling systems we strive to improve the efficiency of the units.	Funding, Staff Training and Education, Staff Time	Staffing and contractor availability. We don't have additional staff to manage major building projects. Additionally, we have a tough time finding available contractors to help develop and/or construct some of our projects.	Former Tower Times, Around the Clock Newsletter, Website, Facebook, Adopt A Storm Drain, Participation in MAMSWaP (Madison Area Municipal Stormwater Partnership) to convey messages throughout the County such as: Leaf-free Streets, Plant Dane, Rain Barrel sales, Salt Wise, Electronic Waste Collection	We have little additional capacity to provide additional educational outreach. We do leverage our messaging by actively participating in the MAMSWaP group to extend our stormwater messaging with 21 other communities in Dane County.
Police	Yes	We do our best to keep the streets and city safe so that current and future generations can meet their needs, as physical safety is at the base of the hierarchy of needs. However, we have less officers than we should, which results in officers working too much OT (often forced), which leads to officers becoming sick and having to use sick time, which leads to other officers working even more OT in a vicious cycle.	Hiring 3-5 additional officers in the next 2 years	Operating at well below optimal staffing	Number of OT shifts per week	Funding, Staff Time, Not enough officers	The biggest barrier is not enough officers		
Finance	No	No changes desired for my department. We deal with accounting, taxes, cash management, and payroll. Decisions for our department functions in regards to sustainability are limited.	None at this time	While we have had tax collections allowed online for a number of years now, many individuals still want to pay in person, thus driving here.	None	Funding, Staff Time, Ordinances, statutes, and/or government	The current levy limit statutes make it extremely hard to continue operations at the same level of service without adding more things.		
Parks and Rex	Yes	We have been prioritizing multi modal transportation and natural resource protection when planning parks. Both have been incorporated as priorities in the recently adopted park design guidelines.	We will be completing wetland and woodland restoration plans for newly acquired parks. I would like to extend that to already owned city properties in the future.	None	None	Funding, Staff Training and Education, Infrastructure, Staff Time	Time/capacity	We have social media and a large user account list for emails.	We could use our social media platforms more, but we have limited capacity to do any additional outreach due to staffing.
Library	Yes	We prioritize sustainability whenever and however we can. Most of our department's carbon footprint comes from the electricity and heating & cooling used by our building. We replaced our boilers several years ago with much more efficient models. We also participate in a program that keeps plastic bags out of landfills, recycling them into composite decking material. This program has been a huge success	We are planning to replace our HVAC system next year, and sustainability and energy efficiency will be a top priority.	As noted above, most of our carbon footprint comes from keeping the lights on and the building heated and cooled. We could always be more efficient when it comes to our use of utilities.	None at the moment	Funding, Infrastructure	There are some limitations of our current building, part of which is almost 120 years old, so certain efficiency upgrades may not be possible. And there is always less funding available than we would like, though federal money/tax credits could help.	We try to offer programs on sustainability whenever possible, both in-person and remotely via Zoom. We are always looking to partner with orgs and agencies to get the word out about sustainability. Other avenues include our website, social media, our email newsletter and local media (newspaper)	Increasing outreach/programming would be difficult without adding more staff, which something we try to do every budget cycle. There is definitely a demand for more library programming and outreach in general.
Stoughton Utilities	Yes we promote responsible resource use both internally and to our customers. We have an obligation to our customers to respect all the thoughts of our customers and we must provide the most reliable service at the lowest cost rates possible.	We were the first to install solar in all of our service territory as we believe in leading by example. We assist our customers by providing energy information and recommend receiving 3 quotes for any improvements or energy efficiency efforts they desire to under take. Stoughton Utilities also participates on our Choose Renewables program for all of our electrical usage for all of our facilities. Further we have undertaken countless energy efficiency projects at all of our facilities and continue to look for other opportunities. We promote our energy portfolio, provide our customers with water conservation measures, energy conservation measures and publicize our programs (such as Choose Renewable).	Unknown	Unknown	I do not believe that we have any documented metrics that we utilize however one of our core values is responsible resource use so we are always looking at all aspects of our business on how we can ensure that we are meeting our core values.	We are a resource to our customers but do not and can not dictate our values on to our customers.	Highlight programs and our own internal efforts via bill inserts, media outlets and our social media.	Within the framework of how we must provide for our customers, I believe that we are achieving our educational outreach goals. An additional opportunity that we have not fully implemented is our outreach and engagement with the school district. We do have some programs that we work with the school district on but there are likely greater opportunities for us to pursue in the future.	