



12 STEPS TO A GREENER COMMUNITY

As the green movement continues to gain momentum, cities across the country are asking what they can do to become greener and more sustainable. There are many ways to define a sustainable city, but it is up to each community to create its own vision of what sustainability means to the people who live there and which specific goals they wish to achieve.

“Sustainable communities are defined as towns and cities that have taken steps to remain healthy over the long term. Sustainable communities have a strong sense of place. They have a vision that is embraced and actively promoted by all of the key sectors of society, including businesses, disadvantaged groups, environmentalists, civic associations, government agencies, and religious organizations. They are places that build on their assets and dare to be innovative. These communities value healthy ecosystems, use resources efficiently, and actively seek to retain and enhance a locally based economy. There is a pervasive volunteer spirit that is rewarded by concrete results. Partnerships between and among government, the business sector, and nonprofit organizations are common. Public debate in these communities is engaging, inclusive, and constructive. Unlike traditional community development approaches, sustainability strategies emphasize: the whole community (instead of just disadvantaged neighborhoods); ecosystem protection; meaningful and broad-based citizen participation; and economic self-reliance.”

– **Institute for Sustainable Communities**

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1. Create a sustainability plan:

The first step to becoming a sustainable city is establishing a plan with specific goals and a long-range vision that are tailored to the unique characteristics of each individual community. This process should involve a considerable amount of public input and may depend on the buy-in of a chief elected official to ensure commitment and participation of government departments.

[Chicago's](#) Mayor Richard Daley and [New York City's](#) Mayor Michael Bloomberg are two well-known sustainability “champions” for their cities, but large cities aren’t the only ones being recognized for their efforts; mayors of smaller cities like Patrick Henry Hays of [North Little Rock, Ark.](#), and Lioneld Jordan of [Fayetteville, Ark.](#), are also putting their communities on the map for their progressive plans toward sustainability.

[ICLEI-Local Governments for Sustainability](#) identifies 10 keys to sustainability planning success:

- 1) Hire a sustainability coordinator to run the show
- 2) Obtain buy-in from a big wig
- 3) Form teams that build bridges across city departments – and beyond city hall
- 4) Develop a greenhouse gas emissions inventory
- 5) Define clear, relevant and measurable goals
- 6) Get regular people to tell you what sustainability goals are important to them
- 7) Develop implementation plans within your plan
- 8) Take a deep breath and release a draft plan for public comment
- 9) Obsessively track the implementation status of your measures
- 10) Remain accountable to the public

2. Increase civic participation and community involvement:

Citizen participation and support is important in all aspects of the planning process. Strategies should be developed to solicit greater input from all economic and social groups throughout the entire community. The [Municipal Research and Services Center of Washington \(MRSC\)](#) offers a guide on using information technology to increase citizen participation, and the [City of Berkeley](#),



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[Calif.](#), has included a citizen participation element as part of its general plan.

Furthermore, communities should encourage the collaboration of stakeholders in making development decisions. For example, the [National Charrette Institute](#) has developed a project management system that spans the entire pre-construction period and includes a multiple-day, collaborative design workshop, that's purposefully open to the public and includes all interested parties. Design-based zoning is an example of a new alternative to traditional Euclidean zoning codes, and integrates public opinion into the pre-construction entitlement process, allowing citizens to have more input on the way their surroundings will look and feel, not just how neighboring lands will be used.

Communities should also strive to increase awareness and engage citizens in the sustainability movement by making information available such as online resources, convenient access to green policy documents and guidelines, community briefing sessions, and informed staff available to answer questions. The [City of Portland, Ore.](#), has created a website called Your Sustainable City, which provides its residents with solutions to living a more earth-friendly lifestyle, and provides resources for outdoor activities and local food sources. Also, Portland's Bureau of Planning and Sustainability webpage displays local green projects and includes information on recycling, climate protection, green jobs and clean energy.

3. Support regional cooperation:

Several issues affecting the sustainability of cities extend beyond municipal boundaries and can only be effectively planned for on a regional scale including economic, social and environmental issues. For example, transportation systems will be more efficient – leading to increased bus/rail ridership – if neighboring communities coordinate their connections together. Rivers and streams are another example, because they flow through multiple jurisdictions, carrying each area's pollutants downstream to nearby communities, destroying wildlife and affecting local economies that use these water bodies for transportation, recreation and drinkable water supplies. According to the [Atlanta Regional Commission \(ARC\)](#), a regional planning and intergovernmental coordination agency for the 10-county area, metro Atlanta obtains 99 percent of its water supply from rivers, lakes and streams. Recently, ARC has been working with the states of Florida, Georgia and Alabama to negotiate an agreement for the equitable allocation of water from Lake Lanier, which 3 million people in metro Atlanta depend on for their water supply. It is estimated that there is enough water in the ACF basin (Lake Lanier) to meet the reasonable needs of all users if the reservoirs are managed properly; however, failure to do so would present a public health and safety threat to metro Atlanta, would harm downstream communities, and would also impact the economy of the entire Southeastern United States.

Local municipalities must be conscious of the effects their actions have on their neighbors and work together to create regional solutions to these larger issues in order to avoid duplicative and inefficient efforts on their own. [Virginia](#) adopted the Regional Cooperation Act in 1995, and has 21 Planning District Commissions (PDCs), which are voluntary associations of local governments intended to foster intergovernmental cooperation.

The [National Association of Regional Councils \(NARC\)](#) advocates for and provides services to its member councils of governments (COGs) and metropolitan planning organizations (MPOs), and serves as a national voice for regionalism.

4. Preserve and enhance natural resources:

The natural resources available to every community should be preserved to protect native species and support biological imperatives for clean water and air, food, shelter and public safety.

When communities are unable to prevent development from breaching important natural



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ecosystems, at a minimum, an effort should be made to preserve linear, connected greenways so wildlife can attain the resources vital to their existence without the interruption of roads or fences. For existing roads and highways, “critter crossings” are an effective tool to protect wildlife by allowing them cross over or under roads with specially designed bridges and tunnels. The [Federal Highway Administration \(FHA\)](#) provides information on various types of critter crossings, and includes a searchable nation-wide database of successful projects.

Where possible and appropriate, natural resources should be enhanced to beautify cities, increase public awareness about the environment, and promote healthy living. The [City of Greenville, S.C.](#), has spent the last two decades working on a massive downtown revitalization project centered around Falls Park on the Reedy River. Before the revitalization effort, the polluted river was in a severe state of decline, with obstructed views and limited access. Now the park offers spectacular waterfall views from the newly constructed Liberty Bridge and serves as a centerpiece attraction for the city, while maintaining the integrity of the natural environment.

5. Support local agriculture and food production:

As Americans continue to become more conscious of what they eat, locally grown and chemical-free foods will become increasingly important both socially and economically. Communities should support and encourage viable, environmentally sound and socially equitable food systems at local and regional levels. The improvement of physical and economic access to farmers markets, organic markets, supermarkets and other places that sell fresh produce will all contribute to a healthier and more sustainable community.

Even large cities can support local farmers and encourage healthy eating habits by removing barriers to – and providing incentives for – urban farming and by providing opportunities for all residents to grow their own food. In 2008, the [City of Philadelphia, Pa.](#), adopted the Philadelphia Food Charter, articulating the city’s commitment to providing safe, affordable, locally grown and healthy food for its residents. The charter calls for the [Mayor’s Office of Sustainability](#) to establish a Food Policy Council that will seek to overcome barriers to urban farming created by zoning, irrigation issues and liability insurance in relationship to use of vacant land, equipment and volunteers. [Farm to Table](#) is a non-profit organization based in Santa Fe, N.M., that is dedicated to promoting locally based agriculture through education, community outreach and networking, and has started a program called Farm to Cafeteria, which links farmers and their fresh foods with meals and snacks in school cafeterias.

6. Implement smart growth strategies:

Several of the sustainability issues facing cities today are a direct result of an outward-moving leapfrog pattern of development known as sprawl. (Sub)urban sprawl and a separation of land uses results in an auto-dependent community, increasing harmful emissions in the air, creating unnecessary burdens on infrastructure, destroying valuable natural resources including prime agricultural lands, and limiting connections, which can provoke social isolation. Many of these negative effects can be significantly reduced by directing new housing and business growth toward areas of existing infrastructure and development.

Communities should increase investment in their downtowns, revitalizing them through brownfield remediation and infill development. Main streets and downtown shopping districts can be improved with the help of coordinated tenant-mix strategies. In surrounding areas mixed-use neighborhood centers should be encouraged. Overall, policies should be established that encourage compact, pedestrian-friendly, walkable and connected communities. The U.S. Green Building Council’s [LEED for Neighborhood Development](#) rating system, which has location-specific prerequisites for certification, can assist local governments as a guide for sustainable neighborhood development policy.



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[Geographic Information Systems \(GIS\)](#) is a powerful tool that many local governments are using to make informed smart growth and sustainable land-use decisions. In 2006, [San Diego, Calif.](#), used GIS to locate potential growth areas while updating its general plan. [Gahanna, Ohio](#), currently uses GIS to map available brownfield sites, providing quick and easy public access to investors as a way to promote its Brownfields Redevelopment initiative. The LEED for Neighborhood Development certification program now offers the [Connections Tool](#), which was developed specifically to assist development project teams with documentation of street connectivity and walking and bicycling distances.

7. Encourage healthy and active living:

Healthy people make healthy communities; therefore, communities should encourage individuals to remain active by preserving public access to open spaces, both formal and informal, including parks, playgrounds, town greens, bodies of water, forests and mountains.

Greenbelts that connect parks and outdoor destinations with bike trails and open spaces are a great way to promote outdoor activities, and in some cases can serve as an alternative commuter route for residents. [Minneapolis](#) has emerged as one of the nation's elite cities for bicycle commuting, offering 43 miles of streets with dedicated bicycle lanes and 84 miles of off-street bicycle paths. The city also utilizes bike sharing programs that allow individuals to check out one of approximately 700 bicycles located at 65 kiosks. The [City of Boulder, Colo.](#), offers over 300 miles of dedicated bike facilities, including on-street, contra-flow, designated routes, paved shoulders, and multi-use and soft surfaces. The [League of American Bicyclists](#) provides an interactive map of bicycle-friendly communities and ranks states' bicycle friendliness based on categories like infrastructure, education and policies.

[Green schools](#) can also be significant contributors to the health of a community. About 20 percent of America spends their day in a school building, and students of all ages in green schools are healthier and more productive because green schools emphasize excellence in areas such as daylighting, thermal comfort, and classroom design. USGBC's [Green School Buildings](#) initiative, the [Green Schools Alliance](#), and the Alliance to Save Energy's [Green Schools Program](#) are examples of the organizations providing information and resources on how to encourage healthy schools.

8. Increase affordable housing options:

Families and individuals in the lowest income brackets suffer disproportionately from substandard housing, high energy costs, and physically isolated neighborhoods and communities. According to the [National Low Income Housing Coalition](#), nearly 18 million households in the United States spend over 50 percent of their annual incomes on housing and utilities. Where direct housing costs are considered affordable, increased transportation costs often undermine that affordability. The [Center for Neighborhood Technology \(CNT\)](#) estimates that just 40 percent of neighborhoods across the country are affordable when factoring in transportation costs. Another recent [study](#) conducted by CNT documents how the "drive until you qualify" approach to home buying may actually cost homeowners more in the long run as compared with purchasing a similar home closer to the city.

Indoor environments of new and existing affordable housing must also be improved because children in low-income families and families of color suffer higher rates of asthma and other chronic illnesses related to indoor air quality when compared with the rest of the population. The [Department of Energy \(DOE\)'s](#) Weatherization Assistance Program (WAP) has an excellent record of success in improving physically deteriorating single-family and, increasingly, multifamily properties. WAP improves the health and safety of affordable homes and reduces annual energy bills by an average of about \$437.



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[Enterprise Green Communities](#) is the first national green building program developed specifically for affordable housing, providing funds and expertise to enable developers to build and rehabilitate homes that are healthier, more energy efficient and better for the environment, without compromising affordability. Green Communities homes are built according to the Green Communities Criteria, the first national framework for healthy, efficient, environmentally smart affordable homes.

Communities can also look to increase public investments in affordable housing for moderate-, low-, and extremely low-income families through federal programs such as the [Low-Income Housing Tax Credit](#), the [Public Housing Capital Fund](#) and the [National Housing Trust Fund](#).

9. Reduce carbon footprint and greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions:

Local governments have the power to affect the main sources of pollution directly linked to climate change: energy use, transportation and waste.

The [U.S. Department of Energy](#) and energy efficiency groups endorse the now common adoption of building energy codes as a fundamental means for achieving higher efficiencies and lower energy use intensities in new residential and commercial construction. In fact, all states are now required to adopt and implement building energy codes, according to the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009. For information on how green building codes can work in tandem with above-code building rating systems like LEED, the [Greening the Codes](#) white paper is an excellent resource.

For existing buildings, [EnergyStar](#) has set the standard for effective management for building energy use. Policies that demand [energy use disclosure](#) is an increasingly recognized means for enabling market forces to drive demand for energy efficient real estate.

The [Climate Action Handbook](#) is a resource guide on climate protection created by ICLEI with support from the city of Seattle and the [U.S. Conference of Mayors](#). The handbook offers examples of actions that local governments can take to reduce global warming emissions and implement the commitments for climate protection called out in the U.S. Mayors' Climate Protection Agreement (MCPA).

The Sierra Club's [Cool Cities Program](#), led by volunteers around the country, is a collaboration of community members, organizations, businesses and local leaders to implement clean energy solutions that save money, create jobs and help curb global warming. The U.S. Green Building Council has partnered with the Sierra Club's Cool Cities Program to produce the [Green Buildings for Cool Cities](#) policy guide. USGBC has also partnered with ICLEI, the city of Seattle and others to create the [Playbook for Green Buildings and Neighborhoods](#), a website that supports climate protection by providing local governments with guidance and resources to rapidly advance green buildings, neighborhoods and infrastructure.

Many cities have already taken steps toward reducing their carbon footprints. For example: The [City of Park City, Utah](#), has conducted a communitywide carbon inventory, which serves as the community's roadmap to reduction; the [City of Seattle](#) has a Climate Protection Initiative that set goals to reduce greenhouse gases in the city 7 percent below 1990 levels by 2012, 30 percent below 1990 levels by 2024, and 80 percent below 1990 levels by 2050; the [City of Phoenix, Ariz.](#), has begun a comprehensive effort to develop a climate action plan to reduce GHG emissions from city operations; and the [City of Atlanta](#) has set goals to reduce overall emissions in the city 7 percent by 2012, recently announcing that the city government had reduced carbon emissions by 5.6 percent between 2007 and 2008.



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10. Support green buildings and green infrastructure:

Buildings account for 38 percent of carbon dioxide emissions and 70 percent of the electricity load in the United States. Communities can dramatically reduce the amount of greenhouse gases they produce as well as their consumption of electricity by establishing policies that encourage building beyond minimum national efficiency standards. Local governments can refer to green building rating systems such as [LEED](#), the [Florida Green Building Coalition](#), [Earthcraft](#) and [ENERGY STAR](#) for design guidelines, or use as a basis for green building incentive programs. Retrofitting existing buildings to improve energy efficiency and healthy indoor environments is equally important. For information about retrofitting existing buildings, review the criteria for [LEED for Existing Buildings: Operations & Maintenance](#).

The preservation of historic buildings offers huge energy savings when considering the embodied energy of an existing building and the amount of energy it takes to replace it with a new one, with additional benefits of helping to maintain a community's connection with its past and attributing to the community's sense of place. Though it is commonly assumed that older buildings will always waste more energy, the [U.S. Energy Information Agency \(EIA\)](#) recently found that buildings constructed before 1920 are actually more energy-efficient than buildings constructed since, with the exception of those built after 2000. Recent calculations performed by the [National Trust for Historic Preservation](#) have indicated that it takes about 65 years for an energy-efficient new building to save the amount of energy lost in demolishing an existing building. Innovations in lighting technology now allow communities to cost-effectively convert public facilities and infrastructure to use smart and efficient lighting strategies, such as [LED](#) and [QL](#) lighting. [Philips](#) has introduced a new Sustainable City Lights initiative that is designing outdoor lighting to collect its own energy from the sun and wind by transforming its appearance throughout the day. At night, LEDs beam light only where needed – and only when needed – through proximity sensing. The [City of Los Angeles](#) started the LED Energy Efficient Street Lighting Program, which has begun to replace modern streetlight fixtures with LED units. The L.A. Bureau of Street Lighting estimates this will cut energy use by 40 percent, preventing approximately 40,500 tons of carbon emissions per year, and will reduce maintenance of the city's street lighting system. There will be no additional charges or fees for the conversion, since the cost will be paid through the savings in energy and maintenance, and according to a case study conducted by the [Clinton Foundation](#), the \$57 million project will translate into energy and maintenance savings of \$10 million annually.

Polluted stormwater runoff can have many adverse effects on plants, fish, animals and people. Stormwater can pick up debris, chemicals, dirt and other pollutants and flow into a stormwater/sewer system or directly to a lake, stream, river, wetland or coastal water. The [Environmental Protection Agency \(EPA\)](#) offers a valuable list of resources on green infrastructure that reduce stormwater runoff, including green roofs, rain harvesting, permeable pavements, green parking, green streets and highways, and urban forestry.

[Rain gardens](#) are an example of an attractive and easy way for communities to protect their watersheds by naturally filtering stormwater with native plant species. Rain gardens also reduce the total amount of runoff draining into overburdened water management systems, decreasing maintenance costs and limiting the need for additional infrastructure. Just a few of the areas promoting the use of rain gardens are the [Rock Island, Ill.](#), [Lafayette, Ind.](#), [western Michigan](#), and the [State of Wisconsin](#). The [State of Oregon](#) offers its Step-by-step Rain Garden Guide to Landscaping for Clean Water and Healthy Streams for residents interested in learning how they can build their own “gardens with a purpose.”

Additional information on how local governments can rapidly advance green buildings, neighborhoods and infrastructure can be found in the [Green Playbook](#), a web-based resource developed by a consortium of more than 20 local governments, non-profit organizations,



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government agencies and utilities.

11. Develop an efficient transportation network that reduces vehicle use:

The combination of limited public transportation options, inefficient road networks, and separated land uses creates an auto-dependent environment that increases vehicle miles traveled (VMT) and adds to overall infrastructure costs.

One way communities can encourage public transportation is through the development of a multimodal transit hub that connects local and regional transit systems. This makes using public transportation options more appealing, and also provides an opportunity to create a central focal point for the community, aiding in the establishment of a sense of place. Recently, the [City of Normal, Ill.](#), was the recipient of a \$22 million federal grant for a new multimodal transportation center. The proposed project has received praise from [Transportation for America \(T4A\)](#), describing the project as “a model for smarter federal transportation spending,” adding that “Normal should be the new ‘norm’ for smaller cities, an example of livable and sustainable development resulting in real job creation and investment from businesses both large and small.”

Additionally, an interconnected network of streets provides multiple routes for travel, which decreases VMT. (Refer to the LEED for Neighborhood Development rating system for a guide on street connectivity) Road networks can also be designed and built safer, more livable, and welcoming to everyone, using concepts like the [Complete Streets](#) initiative. There is an interactive atlas on the initiative’s website that shows all of the cities across the United States that have adopted policies referencing complete streets as part of their design guidelines.

Communities can improve the efficiency of their transportation networks without actually building new or changing existing roads. [Intelligent Transportation Systems and Services \(ITS\)](#) can be integrated into existing infrastructure, and in vehicles themselves, which can relieve congestion, improve safety and enhance productivity. Typical types of ITS strategies might include traffic management centers, coordinated traffic signal systems, real-time traveler information systems, automated vehicle location devices, emergency response centers, automated fare and smart cards, and advance vehicle control and monitoring systems.

12. Reduce waste:

The easiest way for communities to reduce waste is through a comprehensive recycling program. These programs should include pick-up services for standard recyclable goods, as well as drop-off locations for hazardous materials like oil, paint, anti-freeze, batteries and electronics. Part of this includes educating the public on how and what can be recycled. The [City of Fresno, Calif.](#), has established a zero-waste program with goals to reduce up-stream waste, reuse mid-stream waste, and recycle down-stream waste. It is also important to encourage the recycling of construction and demolition debris, which can be accomplished through a local ordinance like one passed in [Northbrook, Ill.](#), and is also a requirement of green building rating systems like LEED.

The [U.S. Environmental Protection Agency \(EPA\)](#) estimates that yard trimmings and food residuals together constitute 26 percent of the U.S. municipal solid waste stream. [Composting](#) can divert this methane-producing waste away from landfills, and can actually generate revenues for the municipality. The [city of San Francisco](#) has created the first large-scale urban collection of food scraps for composting in the country, where compostables are then turned into a nutrient-rich soil amendment, or compost, that is used to produce the organic food and wine for which San Francisco is famous. [Cool 2012](#) is a national initiative to inspire and educate state and local jurisdictions on the importance of getting compostable organics out of the landfill.



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Additional Resources

1. [COOL 2012](#) is a national initiative to inspire and educate state and local jurisdictions on the importance of getting compostable organics out of the landfill. (www.cool2012.com)
2. [EarthCraft House](#) is a green building program that serves as a blueprint for healthy, comfortable homes that reduce utility bills and protect the environment. The aim of the program is to help home builders be leaders in smart growth management and environmental stewardship. (www.earthcrafthouse.com)
3. [ENERGY STAR](#) is a joint program of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and the U.S. Department of Energy helping us all save money and protect the environment through energy-efficient products and practices. (www.energystar.gov)
4. [Green Communities](#) provides funds and expertise to enable developers to build and rehabilitate homes that are healthier, more energy efficient and better for the environment – without compromising affordability. (www.greencommunitiesonline.org)
5. [Green Schools Alliance \(GSA\)](#) was created in response to Mayor Michael Bloomberg's challenge to New York City institutions to reduce their carbon footprint 30 percent by 2030. (www.greenschoolsalliance.org)
6. [ICLEI – Local Governments for Sustainability](#) provides technical consulting, training and information services to build capacity, share knowledge, and support local government in the implementation of sustainable development at the local level. (www.iclei.org)
7. [The Alliance to Save Energy \(ASE\)](#) is a non-profit coalition of business, government, environmental and consumer leaders that supports energy efficiency as a cost-effective energy resource under existing market conditions and advocates energy-efficiency policies that minimize costs to society and individual consumers, and that lessen greenhouse gas emissions and their impact on the global climate. (www.ase.org)
8. [The Building Technologies Program \(BTP\)](#), located in of the Department of Energy's (DOE) Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy (EERE), funds research and technology development to reduce commercial and residential building energy use. (www1.eere.energy.gov/buildings)
9. [The Carl Small Town Center \(CSTC\)](#) is a non-profit organization within the College of Architecture, Art, and Design at Mississippi State University. It was established in 1979, responding to its geographical position within a rural landscape and to the school's focus on the American small town. (www.carlsmalltowncenter.org)
10. [The Center for Neighborhood Technology \(CNT\)](#) is a creative think-and-do tank that combines rigorous research with effective solutions. CNT works across disciplines and issues, including transportation and community development, energy, natural resources and climate change. (www.cnt.org)
11. [The Clinton Climate Initiative \(CCI\)](#) aims to create and advance solutions to the core issues driving climate change. It takes a holistic approach, addressing the major sources of greenhouse gas emissions and the people, policies and practices that impact them. (www.clintonfoundation.org/what-we-do/clinton-climate-initiative)
12. [The Florida Green Building Coalition \(FGBC\)](#) is a nonprofit Florida corporation dedicated to improving the built environment. Their mission is "to provide a statewide green building program that defines, promotes, and encourages sustainable efforts with environmental and economic benefits." (www.floridagreenbuilding.org)
13. [The Green Playbook](#) provides local governments with guidance and resources to rapidly advance green buildings, neighborhoods and infrastructure. (www.greenplaybook.org)
14. [The Intelligent Transportation Society of America \(ITSA\)](#) is the leading advocate for technologies that improve the safety, security and efficiency of the nation's surface transportation system. Members include private corporations, public agencies and academic institutions involved in the research, development and design of Intelligent Transportation Systems technologies that



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enhance safety, increase mobility and sustain the environment.

(www.itsa.org)

15. [The League of American Bicyclists \(LAB\)](http://www.bikeleague.org) promotes bicycling for fun, fitness and transportation and works through advocacy and education for a bicycle-friendly America. (www.bikeleague.org)
16. [The National Association of Regional Councils \(NARC\)](http://www.narc.org) serves as the national voice for regionalism by advocating for regional cooperation as the most-effective way to address a variety of community planning and development opportunities and issues. (www.narc.org)
17. [The National Charrette Institute \(NCI\)](http://www.charretteinstitute.org) is an IRS 501(c)(3) nonprofit educational institution that teaches professionals and community leaders the NCI Charrette System™, a design-based, accelerated, collaborative project management system that harnesses the talents and energies of all interested parties to create and support a feasible plan. (www.charretteinstitute.org)
18. [The National Complete Streets Coalition \(NCSC\)](http://www.completestreets.org) seeks to fundamentally transform the look, feel and function of the roads and streets in our community, by changing the way most roads are planned, designed and constructed. (www.completestreets.org)
19. [The National Low Income Housing Coalition \(NLIHC\)](http://www.nlihc.org) is dedicated solely to achieving socially just public policy that assures people with the lowest incomes in the United States have affordable and decent homes. (www.nlihc.org)
20. [The National Trust for Historic Preservation \(NTHP\)](http://www.preservationnation.org) is a private, nonprofit membership organization dedicated to saving historic places and revitalizing America's communities. (www.preservationnation.org)
21. [The Sierra Club's Cool Cities Program](http://www.coolcities.us), led by volunteers around the country, is a collaboration among community members, organizations, businesses and local leaders to implement clean energy solutions that save money, create jobs and help curb global warming. (www.coolcities.us)
22. [The STAR Community Index](http://www.starcommunityindex.org) is a national, consensus-based framework for gauging the sustainability and livability of U.S. communities. STAR is developed through a partnership between ICLEI-Local Governments for Sustainability (ICLEI), the U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC), and the Center for American Progress (CAP). (www.starcommunityindex.org)
23. [The Sustainable Cities Institute \(SCI\)](http://www.sustainablecitiesinstitute.org) supports efforts in environmental stewardship initiatives and provides proactive solutions to helping create healthy "green" communities. (www.sustainablecitiesinstitute.org)
24. [The U.S. Conference of Mayors \(USCM\)](http://www.usmayors.org) is the official nonpartisan organization of cities with populations of 30,000 or more. There are 1,204 such cities in the country today. Each city is represented in the Conference by its chief elected official, the mayor. (www.usmayors.org)
25. [The U.S. Green Building Council \(USGBC\)](http://www.usgbc.org) is a 501(c)(3) non-profit community of leaders working to make green buildings available to everyone within a generation. (www.usgbc.org)
26. [Transportation for America \(T4A\)](http://www.t4america.org) is a growing, national coalition committed to creating a new national transportation program that will take America into the 21st century by building a modernized infrastructure and healthy communities where people can live, work and play. (www.t4america.org)
27. [The Department of Energy's Building Energy Codes Program](http://www.energycodes.gov/) has information about building energy codes for both residential and commercial buildings. (www.energycodes.gov/)
28. [The Greening the Codes white paper](http://www.usgbc.org/ShowFile.aspx?DocumentID=7403) explains how the LEED rating systems have impacted the development of codes and how codes and LEED can be used together to green the built environment. (<http://www.usgbc.org/ShowFile.aspx?DocumentID=7403>)



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Municipal Sustainability Websites

- **Albuquerque, N.M.:** Albuquerque Green – www.cabq.gov/albuquerquegreen
- **Atlanta, Ga.:** Mayor's Office, Department of Sustainability – www.atlantaga.gov/mayor/sustainability.aspx
- **Austin, Texas:** Environmental Department – www.ci.austin.tx.us/site/environmental_portal.htm
- **Baltimore, Md.:** Office of Sustainability – www.baltimoresustainability.org
- **Bend, Ore.:** Sustainability Homepage – www.ci.bend.or.us/sustainability
- **Berkeley, Calif.:** Office of Energy and Sustainable Development – www.ci.berkeley.ca.us/sustainable
- **Boston, Mass.:** Environmental and Energy Services – www.cityofboston.gov/environmentalandenergy
- **Burnsville, Minn.:** Sustainability Department – www.ci.burnsville.mn.us/sustainability
- **Charlottesville, Va.:** A Green City – www.charlottesville.org/index.aspx?page=2098
- **Chattanooga, Tenn.:** Green Chattanooga – www.chattanooga.gov/ChattanoogaGreen
- **Chicago, Ill.:** Sustainable Development Department – www.cityofchicago.org/city/en/depts/zlup/provdrs/sustain.html
- **Cleveland, Ohio:** Office of Sustainability – www.city.cleveland.oh.us/sustainability
- **Dallas, Texas:** Green Dallas – www.greendallas.net
- **Destiny, Fla.:** Homepage – www.destinyflorida.com
- **Dubuque, Iowa:** Sustainable Dubuque – www.cityofdubuque.org/index.aspx?nid=606
- **Fayetteville, Ark.:** Sustainable Fayetteville – www.accessfayetteville.org/government/sustainability
- **Flagstaff, Ariz.:** Sustainability Program – www.flagstaff.az.gov/sustainability
- **Fresno, Calif.:** Sustainable Fresno – www.fresno.gov/Government/DepartmentDirectory/PlanningandDevelopment/SustainableFresno
- **Grand Rapids, Mich.:** Office of Energy and Sustainability – www.ci.grand-rapids.mi.us/index.pl?page_id=10522
- **Houston, Texas:** Green Houston – www.greenhoustontx.gov
- **Indianapolis, Ind.:** Office of Sustainability – www.sustainindy.org
- **Knoxville, Tenn.:** Sustainability in the City of Knoxville – www.ci.knoxville.tn.us/sustainability
- **Las Vegas, Nev.:** Sustaining Las Vegas – www.lasvegasnevada.gov/sustaininglasvegas
- **Long Beach, Calif.:** Office of Sustainability – www.longbeach.gov/citymanager/citys_sustainability_programs
- **Madison, Wis.:**
 - Sustainability Homepage – www.cityofmadison.com/sustainability
 - Mayor's Office of Environmental Coordination – www.nyc.gov/html/oec
- **Milwaukee, Wis.:** Office of Environmental Sustainability – www.ci.mil.wi.us/greenteam
- **Minneapolis, Minn.:** Sustainable Initiatives – www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/sustainability
- **New Haven, Conn.:** Office of Sustainability – www.cityofnewhaven.com/sustainability
- **New York City, N.Y.:** PLANYC 2030 – www.nyc.gov/html/planyc2030
- **North Hampton, Mass.:** Sustainability Northampton Plan – www.northamptonma.gov/aboutNorthampton/Sustainability_Plan
- **Northbrook, Ill.:** Going Green – www.northbrook.il.us/services/Green.php
- **Olympia, Wash.:** Sustainability Homepage – www.olympiawa.gov/en/community/sustainability.aspx
- **Palm Springs, Calif.:** Your Sustainable City – www.ci.palm-springs.ca.us/index.aspx?page=580
- **Park City, Utah :** Sustainability Department – <http://www.parkcity.org/> (click on Government, City Departments, Sustainability)
- **Pasadena, Calif.:** Green City – www.cityofpasadena.net/GreenCity



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- **Philadelphia, Pa.:** Mayor's Office of Sustainability – www.phila.gov/green
- **Phoenix, Ariz.:** Environment and Sustainability – www.phoenix.gov/greenphoenix
- **Portland, Ore.:** Bureau of Planning and Sustainability – www.portlandonline.com/bps
- **Portsmouth, N.H.:** Sustainability Homepage – www.cityofportsmouth.com/sustainability
- **Saint Paul, Minn.:** Sustainable Saint Paul – www.stpaul.gov/sustainability
- **Salt Lake City, Utah:** SLC Green – www.slcgov.com/slccgreen
- **San Francisco, Calif.:**
 - Department of the Environment – www.sfenvironment.org
 - Sustainable City – www.sustainable-city.org
- **San Jose, Calif.:** San Jose Green Vision – www.sanjoseca.gov/greenvision
- **Santa Fe, N.M.:** Sustainable Santa Fe – www.santafenm.gov/sustainablesantafe
- **Santa Monica, Calif.:** Office of Sustainability and the Environment – www.smgov.net/departments/ose
- **Sarasota County, Fla.:** Sustainability Homepage – www.scgov.net/Sustainability
- **Seattle, Wash.:** Office of Sustainability and Environment – www.seattle.gov/environment
- **Tacoma, Wash.:** Sustainability Homepage – www.cityoftacoma.org/Page.aspx?hid=14549
- **Tulsa, Okla.:** Office of Sustainability – www.cityoftulsa.org/environmental-programs/office-of-sustainability.aspx
- **West Linn, Ore.:** Sustainability Homepage – www.westlinnoregon.gov/publicworks/sustainability

Does your city or county have a sustainability website that you think would be helpful for other municipalities? E-mail us a link at publicpolicies@usgbc.org.