



CITY OF
TALLAHASSEE

2023
SUSTAINABILITY
SPOTLIGHT

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CITY OF
TALLAHASSEE

OUR PATH



A sustainable community meets the needs of the present without compromising its ability to meet the needs of the future. At the City of Tallahassee, we consistently strive to incorporate sustainable practices across all operations. The 2023 Sustainability Spotlight highlights progress the City has made in the past year toward the sustainability goals identified in this report.

Sustainability considers the interdependent relationship between environmental stewardship, economic strength and social integrity. These three elements are considered in concert with one another and help guide the vision for Tallahassee's future.

From everyday measures that seek to reduce waste to equitable renewable energy goals, the City looks for diverse ways to make our community more sustainable for current and future generations.

In 2013, the City Commission adopted the Tallahassee GreenPrint, a strategic framework to guide the City toward greater sustainability. Since then, the City has adopted a Strategic Plan and a Community Resilience Plan, and it will soon have a Clean Energy Plan. The City's strategic goals and objectives identified in both the 2024 Strategic Plan and the Community Resilience Plan are aligned and include enhancing and modernizing the City's public infrastructure, facilitating the construction of affordable housing, leading in environmental stewardship, providing efficient and equitable public transit, and leading in utility service.



The City and its residents have a long-standing commitment to making City operations and our community more sustainable. Over the past decade, the City has moved the needle forward in myriad ways:



- 
- 2013** – Adopted the Tallahassee GreenPrint to establish the City’s strategic sustainability framework
 - 2014** – Received the Five Milestones for Sustainability Award from ICLEI – Local Governments for Sustainability
 - 2017** – Broke ground at Tallahassee International Airport on the world’s largest airport-based solar farm
 - 2017** – Hired its first Chief Resilience Officer
 - 2019** – Adopted the Tallahassee Community Resilience Plan
 - 2019** – Adopted the Clean Energy Resolution
 - 2021** – Adopted Single-use Plastics Policy to restrict the use of certain types of plastics on City property
 - 2021** – Adopted Green Building Policy to guide sustainable building and renovation standards for City-owned projects
 - 2021** – Recognized as a Gold Level LEED Certified City by the U.S. Green Building Council
 - 2022** – Received Solar Energy Innovation Network grant to develop equitable household solar access

As you read through this spotlight, you will see the GreenPrint’s eight original goals, as well as relevant focus areas. These goals and focus areas continue to guide new and ongoing initiatives to position the City as a global sustainability leader.



LEADERSHIP

GOAL: Foster a culture of sustainability and enhance the City's role as a regional, national and international leader in the field.



FOCUS AREAS

Integrating Sustainability

Employee Participation

Evaluating and Benchmarking

Community Partnerships

Sustainability Partnerships

The City continues to collaborate across state, regional and national organizations in order to learn best practices and move our sustainability goals forward.

- The City is an active member of the Capital Area Sustainability Compact, which partners the City with seven of the largest governmental, university and business institutions in the area.
- Sustainability staff actively engage with the Florida Sustainability Directors Network, the Southeast Sustainability Directors Network, ICLEI – Local Governments for Sustainability and other sustainability-focused organizations.



Neighborhood Leadership Roundtable

Acknowledgements and Recognitions

The following highlights some of the ways the City was recognized as a leader in sustainability in 2022.

- Maintained diamond-level designation for superior public power reliability from the American Public Power Association (APPA)
- Earned Government Green Fleet Award from the National Association of Fleet Administrators (NAFA)
- Designated a Tree City USA for the 31st consecutive year
- Received Arbor Day Foundation's national Growth Award for the seventh consecutive year
- Earned Silver Award for Economic Equity and Inclusion from the International Economic Development Council (earned by the joint Tallahassee-Leon County Office of Economic Vitality)



**SMART
ENERGY
PROVIDER**

American Public Power Association



EDUCATION

GOAL: Educate the community on the issues and practices of environmental and economic stewardship and social equity.



FOCUS AREAS

Sustainability Training

Internal Sustainability Network

Community Awareness

Local School, College and University Collaboration

Employee Training

Maintaining the highest standards in sustainable operations, City employees undergo general and job-specific training year-round.

629

City employees received environmental training from the City's Environmental Services Division in 2022.

Since 2007, the City has maintained ISO 14001 Environmental Management System certification for operations in Underground Utilities and Public Infrastructure. This certification requires environmental awareness training with a focus on stormwater management, recycling, illicit discharges and waste disposal.



Energy Equity

The City, in partnership with ReThink Energy Florida and leaders from the Bond, Frenchtown and Griffin Heights neighborhoods, launched the SEED project (Solar Energy Equity Deployment) aimed at educating, empowering and expanding solar access to residents. **SEED is one of only eight initiatives across the country selected by the U.S. Department of Energy's National Renewable Energy Laboratory to participate in the Solar Energy Innovation Network, which is focused on equitable adoption of solar power in underserved communities.**

Community Outreach and Education

Various strategies are used by the City to keep residents informed about its many sustainability efforts and successes. In 2022, this outreach included:

- **300+** sustainability-related social media posts, collectively earning more than 7,000 engagements, including videos that also aired on WCOT-13
- **3,400+** views of City's new "In the Bin" series of YouTube Shorts in first three months since launch
- **65,000** copies of the monthly Insight newsletter produced, with extended reach via the online version, which helps inform City Utility customers about sustainability programs and tips
- Delivering the annual Water Quality Report to City Utility customers, sharing the report on social media and providing the report on Talgov.com
- **15+** news articles published that highlight City sustainability programs and achievements
- Sharing information about sustainability programs and opportunities for residents at in-person City-sponsored or City-hosted events



City's YouTube Shorts series "In the Bin" available at [YouTube.com/CityofTLH](https://www.youtube.com/CityofTLH)



HEALTH

GOAL: Improve overall health and wellness in the community.



FOCUS AREAS

Recreation Opportunities

Wellness Infrastructure

Environmental Health Awareness

Urban Farms and Community Gardens

Parks and Recreation Programming

The City offers a wide variety of recreational and wellness opportunities. In FY22, more than 400,000 participants enjoyed recreational programs at City facilities, which include:

94 parks

8 community centers

2 service centers and 1 senior center, which also serve as resilience hubs

≈4,000 acres of parks

70+ miles of trails

In 2022, the City expanded its park system with the addition of the FAMU Way Skateable Art Park.



FAMU Way Skateable Art Park

Healthy Homes

The City was awarded \$4.4 million from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development Office of Lead Hazard Control and Healthy Homes to launch the City's first Healthy Homes Tallahassee program, which begins in spring 2023. Healthy Homes Tallahassee funds will be used to remediate lead, radon, mold and other health hazards in rental units across the city.

Urban Agriculture and Community Gardens

The City's Five-Year Strategic Plan objective to improve food access for residents continues to be a focus through investment in our urban food infrastructure.

1 City Farm TLH Pilot Farm

6 Community Gardens

8 Southside Farmers Market days with 2.5 tons of fresh food sold to the community

200 coupons for the Southside Farmers Market distributed at the Senior Center to ensure accessibility and equity



Southside Farmers Market



ECONOMICS

GOAL: Support a robust green-sector economy.



FOCUS AREAS

Environmentally Preferable Purchasing

Capital Projects and Sustainability Integration

Local and Sustainable Businesses

Education and Training for a Green Economy

Urban Farming and Entrepreneurship Training

Thirty-five trainees completed the City Farm TLH Urban Farming and Entrepreneurship Training Program during 2022, for a total of 59 graduates over the past two years. Additionally, five trainees went on to participate in paid internships with established farmers.

Brownfields Program

The City leverages federal and state dollars to assess, clean up and reinvest in properties where the presence or potential presence of environmental contaminants hinders redevelopment. In 2022, the City was awarded:

\$400,000

from the Florida Department of Environmental Protection for the assessment and remediation of the former Rose Printing property on Jackson Bluff Road

\$500,000

from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency to conduct environmental assessments, cleanup planning and community involvement activities within Tallahassee's Southside.



Aerial view of Cascades Park

Planning for the Economy and Sustainability

In 2022, the Tallahassee-Leon County Office of Economic Vitality (OEV) developed its new Economic Development Strategic Plan, which continues to pursue a more diverse, resilient and sustainable local economy through a focus on four target industry sectors: Applied Sciences & Innovation, Light Manufacturing & Transportation Logistics, Professional Services & Information Technology, and Health Care.



Southside Transit Center concept

Southside Transit Center

In 2022, the City conducted significant public outreach to receive resident feedback on the ongoing plans for the Southside Transit Center. Once built, the center will be located at the corner of Orange Avenue and Meridian Street. It will improve mobility and bridge gaps in accessibility by providing more direct transit services, reduce travel and wait times of transit users, and integrate multiple transportation modes (buses, bikes, scooters, pedestrian services and more).

In addition to utilizing the City's Green Building Policy, the project will include electric charging stations in all bus bays, charging infrastructure for light-duty fleet vehicles, and solar panels to generate additional solar energy for the City.



GREEN ACROSS THE CITY



Biofuel/Used Cooking Oil Collection Sites

- Fleet Management Department - 400 Dupree Street
- Solid Waste Services - 2727 Municipal Way



City of Tallahassee Solar Farm – Tallahassee International Airport



Resilience Hubs

- Lincoln Center - 438 West Brevard Street
- Tallahassee Senior Center - 1400 North Monroe Street
- Smith-Williams Service Center - 2295 Pasco Street
- Jack L. McLean Community Center - 700 Paul Russell Road



City Farm TLH Pilot Farm – 530 Kissimmee Street



Community Gardens

- Macon Community Garden Project - 322 Macon Road
- Green Slope Community Garden - 1127 Albritton Drive
- Seminole Manor Community Garden - 4002 Roberts Avenue
- Providence Community Garden - 1800 Indian River Street
- Ninth and Terrace Park Community Garden - 615 East Ninth Avenue
- LeVerne Payne Community Center - 450 West Fourth Avenue



City-supported Farmers Markets

- Southside Farmers Market, Walker-Ford Community Center, 2301 Pasco Street
- Tallahassee Downtown Market, Ponce de Leon Park, Park Avenue



Community Recycling Centers

- Lake Ella Park, South Lake Ella Drive
- City Solid Waste Services, 2727 Municipal Way
- Renaissance Building, 435 N. Macomb Street
- St. John's Episcopal Bookstore, 131 N. Calhoun Street



New City Parks

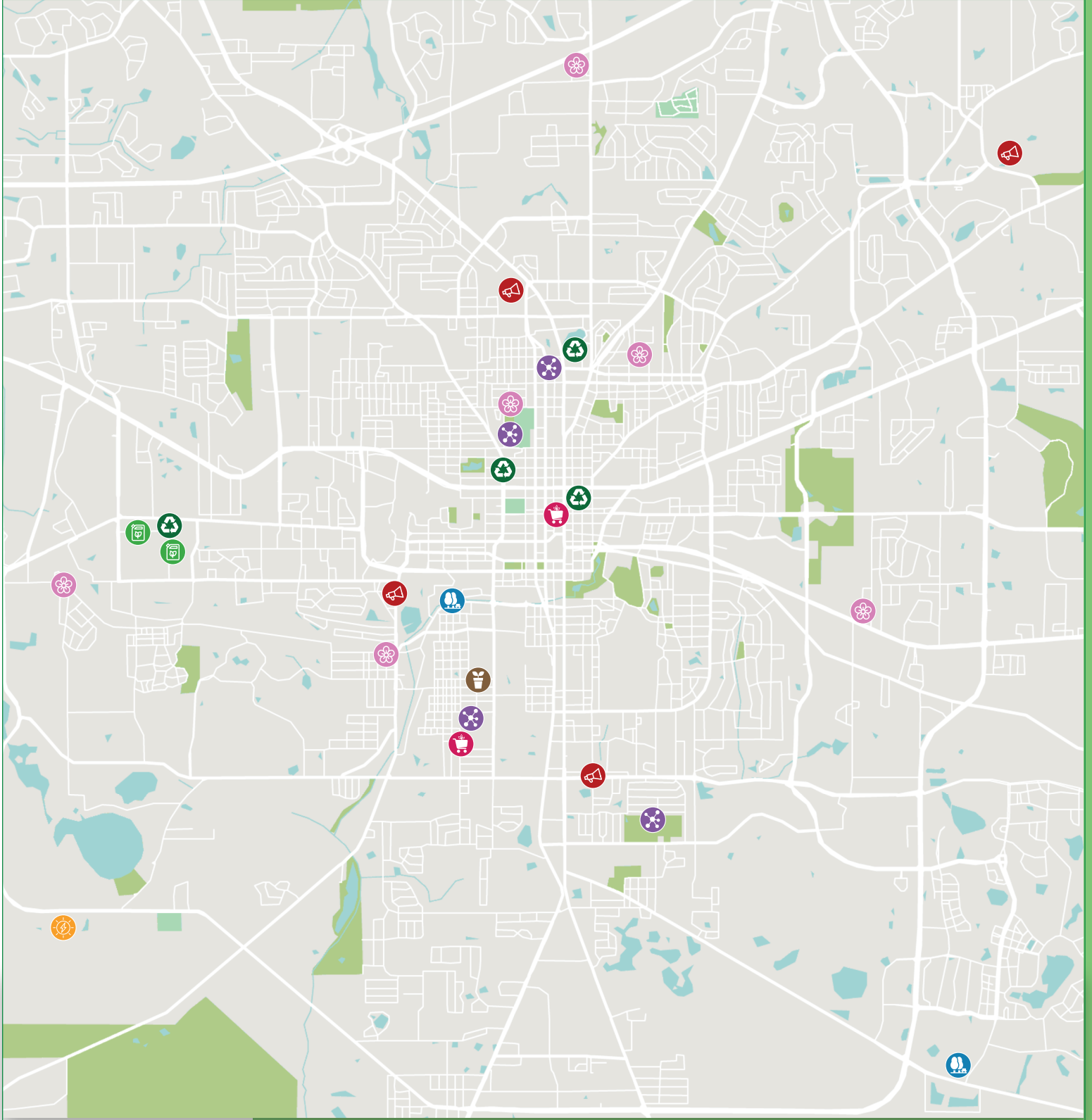
- FAMU Way Skateable Art Park
- Four Oaks Park



Coming Soon!

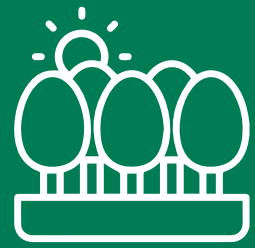
- StarMetro Southside Transit Center
- Senior Center - Welaunee
- Tallahassee Police Department Headquarters - Northwood
- Fire Station 17





NATURAL RESOURCES

GOAL: Preserve, conserve, protect and manage the area's natural resources in a manner that supports the community's economic and social vitality.



FOCUS AREAS

Water Resources

Air Quality

Nontraditional Pollution

Urban Tree Canopy

Urban Forestry

Preserving Tallahassee's beloved tree canopy contributes to Tallahassee's unique character, increases air quality and mitigates stormwater runoff and heat island effect. In 2022, urban forestry efforts included:

55% tree canopy coverage maintained throughout the City - one of the highest in the nation

300+ trees planted through the Adopt a Tree program

21 memorial trees planted in City parks
additional trees planted throughout City

450+ parks, rights-of-way and beautification areas

Invasive Plant Control

The City coordinates activities to help address invasive plants in our parks and natural areas.

300+ volunteer hours removing invasive plants in City parks and natural areas

500+ acres of parks and natural areas treated for invasive species control



Arbor Day tree planting event at Governor's Park

Protecting Our Water Resources

The City is dedicated to protecting our ground and surface water resources through a variety of proactive efforts, including:

17.5M gallons per day of reclaimed water used for irrigation of crops, public areas, golf courses and roadsides

48 septic systems abandoned and customers connected to central sewer within the Wakulla Springs Protection Zone through the City's Septic Over Sewer grant program between 2017 and 2022

1,500 Public Service Announcements aired for the Think About Personal Pollution (TAPP) program to educate about local water resource protection



Piney-Z Lake

Air Quality

In 2021, the City continued to reduce both total greenhouse gas emissions and carbon intensity in electric power generation. Carbon intensity, a measure of how cleanly our electricity is produced, has improved roughly 40% from the year 2000 levels and 48.8% since 1990.





City Farm TLH's latest graduating class



Four Oaks Park

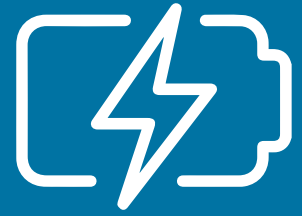


City of Tallahassee Solar Farm



ENERGY

GOAL: Provide a safe, reliable, efficient and cost-effective energy system that moves the City toward a net-zero carbon operation and 100 percent clean renewable energy.



FOCUS AREAS

Energy Efficiency

Clean Energy Generation

Clean Fuel Vehicles

Electric Vehicle Infrastructure

Clean Energy Resolution

Adopted in 2019, the City's Clean Energy Resolution formalizes its commitment to energy sustainability and sets ambitious goals to reinvent Tallahassee's energy future by 2050. In 2022, staff continued the development of a Clean Energy Plan (CEP), informed by extensive public engagement, that will set forth policies and practices to enable the City to meet the resolution's two key milestones:

- **2035:** Achieve 100% net clean, renewable energy in City operations
- **2050:** Achieve 100% net clean, renewable energy community-wide

In 2022, the City made significant progress toward the milestones:

100% of municipal buildings are covered by clean, renewable solar energy

15% of the City's light duty fleet is electric, with 25% anticipated by 2024

33% of StarMetro's bus fleet has transitioned to electric vehicles



Ford Lightning Electric Truck

Solar Power

The use of solar energy helped the City continue to pursue its clean energy goals in FY22.

114M kWh delivered from City solar farms

11.9M kWh estimated electricity generated in FY22 by the City's Solar Net Metering Program, an approximately 56% increase over FY21

4.8M lbs of greenhouse gas emissions estimated to have been avoided due to solar net metering in FY22 alone



City of Tallahassee Solar Farm



Green Fleet Transition

The City of Tallahassee is committed to converting 100% of its light-duty fleet to electric vehicles by 2035. Today's fleet includes:

- 75** electric vehicles (EV) in use, with an additional 12 ordered
- 69** Compressed Natural Gas vehicles
- 63** hybrid vehicles, with an additional 72 ordered

To date, the City has installed 52 EV charging stations for its light-duty fleet vehicles and three overhead chargers for in-route bus charging.

The City also received \$5.1 million from the FDEP and EPA's Diesel Emissions Reduction Act grant to acquire up to five battery-electric buses.

As of February 2023, electric and hybrid fleet vehicles have been driven 3.4+ million miles, representing an estimated savings of over 2.5 million pounds of CO₂ and nearly 19,000 trees.



Electric vehicle

PowerTLH

The City launched the PowerTLH pilot program, aimed at expanding public access to electric vehicle charging stations by installing them in City-owned parking garages and other public spaces. Three initial sites have been identified and are in the design phase of development.



PowerTLH electric vehicle charging

Energy Efficiency Incentives

The City offers customers many financial incentives to reduce energy consumption and foster greater efficiency. Participation in FY22 included:

- 2,400+** ENERGY STAR rebates totaling over \$450,000
- 410+** energy efficiency grants totaling over \$155,000
- 3,600+** residential energy audits
- 120+** commercial energy audits
- 270+** residential loans totaling over \$2.1 million
- 6** commercial loans totaling over \$53,000



City offers free energy audits



WASTE MANAGEMENT

GOAL: Decrease the amount of solid waste generated within the City's solid waste service area.



FOCUS AREAS

Education and Awareness

Waste Reduction

Reuse

Recycling

Construction and Demolition Debris

84% of demolition debris from the former Northwood Centre was recycled, including:

4,000+ tons of metal

26,000+ tons of concrete

117+ tons of mixed construction and demolition debris

Biodiesel

6,300 gal

of biodiesel were produced by the City in 2022. This biofuel, which is produced at the City's fleet facility and used within the City fleet, is made with used cooking oil provided by residents and restaurants.

Recycling

The City provides weekly single-stream recycling collection for residents, which diverts waste from the landfill and saves resources.

11,760+ tons of material were recycled by the City in FY22

Biosolids

In 2022, the City sold over 3,300 tons of Class AA biosolids developed through the wastewater reclamation process. These highly treated biosolids were sold in bulk quantities to golf courses, farmers and fertilizer bagging companies to be used as a fertilizer supplement or soil amendment.

Cash for Trash

The City's annual Cash for Trash program provides a credit on solid waste customers' utility bills for properly disposing of garbage that is not suitable for the waste bin. In 2022, the program served nearly 700 customers and collected:

8 tons of tires

16 tons of bulk waste

9 tons of household hazardous waste

6 tons of electronics



Hazardous materials collected during the biannual Cash for Trash event



LAND DEVELOPMENT AND MOBILITY

GOAL: Facilitate land development patterns, transportation options and building practices that support the City's sustainability goals.



FOCUS AREAS

Development in the Mobility District and Other Urban Areas

Green Building

Green Industry and Infrastructure

Alternative Transportation

Bike and Pedestrian Facilities

To increase alternative transportation options and encourage the health and safety of its residents, the City initiated and completed numerous bike and pedestrian projects, including:

2,800 ft of sidewalk installed on Saxon Street

410 ft of sidewalk installed on Robert and Trudie Perkins Way

1/2 mi climbing bike lane installed along Hillcrest Street

Micromobility

Alternative transportation options continued to be popular in the City in 2022.

121,349 e-scooter rides, covering 135,638 miles, with an average trip distance of 1.31 miles

159,267 pedestrian and cyclist trips across the Cascades Connector Bridge



Cycling near Cascades Park

Public Transit

With battery electric buses comprising one-third of the fleet, StarMetro, the City's public transit system, continues to help reduce congestion, save energy and provide a cost-effective transportation option for residents. In FY22, StarMetro provided:

2.4M+ passenger trips

8.8M+ passenger miles traveled

Additionally, StarMetro expanded the Student Transportation for Academics and Responsibilities (STAR) Program for free bus service provided to K-12 students with over 1,500 participants signed up for the 22-23 school year.



StarMetro bus





BUILDING SUSTAINABILITY INTO RESILIENCE HUBS

The City has designated four of its community/service centers as Resilience Hubs. These hubs augment traditional recreational and public facilities with enhanced social services year-round, environmentally sustainable designs and emergency preparedness and disaster recovery resources. Day-to-day, they offer wellness programs, lifelong learning classes, mental health support and more. When a natural disaster impacts our community, they are central for resource distribution and other vital recovery needs. Overall, Resilience Hubs are trusted community spaces.

To further strengthen them, enhancements are underway, both to the physical structures and the services offered to residents.

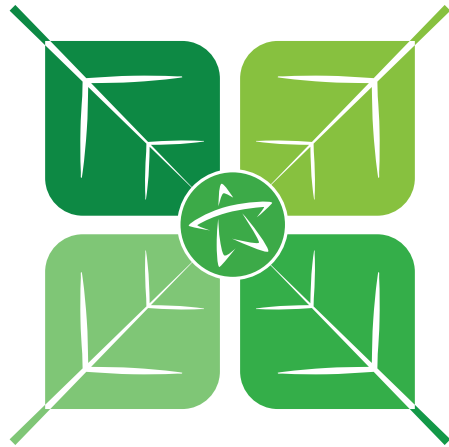
Energy efficiency efforts at Resilience Hubs include the installation of solar panels, which is reducing energy consumption and CO₂ emissions. To help the buildings better withstand natural disasters, windows, doors and roofs are being replaced. In line with the City's commitment to sustainability, construction and demolition debris is recycled during all renovation or building activities.

Inside the hubs, the changes are equally significant. The City leveraged federal and grant funding to provide extended mental health services at Resilience Hubs. This help can provide vulnerable residents with the support and skills needed to better manage life's challenges. Medical services are also offered. Additionally, on-site farmers markets and regular meal offerings are increasing access to fresh, healthy food in the communities around the hubs.

Resilience Hubs are focal points within the community, so access is important. All the facilities are served by StarMetro, pedestrian friendly and bicycle friendly.

Each Resilience Hub is unique, shaped by its patrons and space. From after-school tutoring and neighborhood meetings to providing a place to recharge after a hurricane, Resilience Hubs bolster social connections and improve access to resources. Learn more at Talgov.com/Resilience.







[Talgov.com/Sustainability](https://talgov.com/Sustainability)