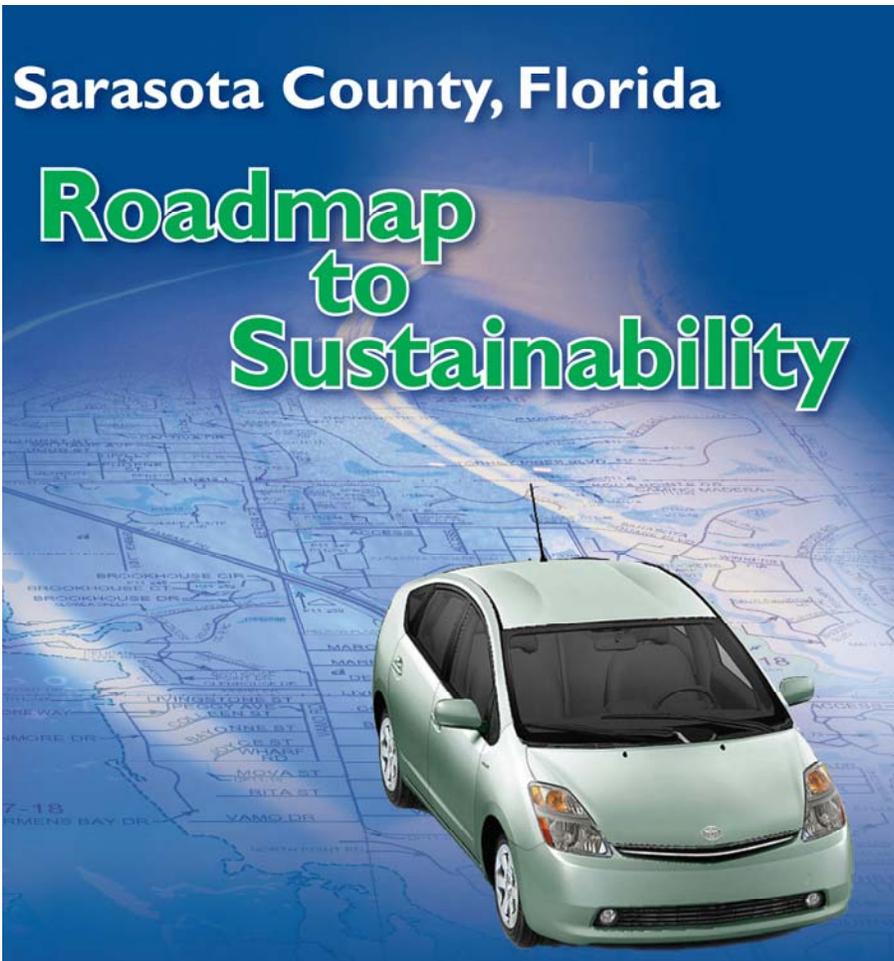


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# Roadmap to Sustainability

## The Challenge

Sarasota County and its resources are faced with the challenges of growth, economic instability and balancing our way of life with our quality of life. We know that global climate change is real; we see its consequences daily. The demands that we make on our finite natural resources are depleting them faster than they can reasonably be expected to regenerate. As we deplete resources such as fossil fuels, we also put harmful greenhouse gases into the atmosphere. To reverse these harmful effects to our environment, our way of life and our health, we must take significant steps that examine and restructure the way we establish policies, processes and programs.

As a government entity, we play a critical role as both consumers of the present and architects of the future. To ensure our county's sustainability, we must address such issues. We could address them through rules and regulations. In this case we are not focused on merely governing. Rather, we are working to preserve and enhance the community we love and are invested in by creating a paradigm shift that ensures its quality and success well beyond the time of our service.

Planning for a sustainable community is the overarching theme of the Sarasota County Comprehensive Plan. Sarasota County government is committed to lead by example, promote public participation and work in community partnership to improve our quality of life and protect the natural systems that support life.

- Sarasota County Comprehensive Plan 2006

Consistent with that plan statement, we have put much energy into our sustainability efforts, and appropriately so. We have generated ideas and realized results. We have worked throughout the community with both public and private enterprise, networking and creating effective partnerships, policies and programs. We accomplished this with minimal organizational structure and limited ownership, and clearly have enjoyed some measure of success.

To build on those early successes and make a broader impact, it is time to step up the effort, institute broader organizational ownership and structure, and establish metrics to effectively track our efforts' impact.

Please consider this: "What is Sarasota County, as an organization and a community, doing to become sustainable?" This question includes not only what we are doing to reduce our harmful impacts on the environment, but how we are doing so in ways that are economically and socially sustainable. If we save the environment, but damage our economy or the quality of life we enjoy, we cannot qualify the results a success.

This document outlines our map to a sustainable future. It delineates our successes and current efforts, and outlines a roadmap that will help us navigate Sarasota County's path toward sustainability. Included is a framework is a series of high quality metrics that will help us measure our success, a definition of our "drivers", "vehicles" and "fuels"; and a specific Action Plan with Action Teams for accelerating the trip. The roadmap to sustainability is based upon the belief that we have a destination to reach – sustainability – and we need to know how to get there.

## Broader Community Partnerships

That said, our strategy for success relies on shifting the collective behavior of county government operations and our citizens to create the greatest potential for a lasting difference that moves us

# Roadmap to Sustainability

toward our goal of a sustainable and renewable community. No single entity can accomplish this. Broader community partnerships will expand ownership and responsibility. The more inclusive the effort, the greater the likelihood of success. Sustainability is not the sole province of government; it should become a lifestyle mandate for all.

## Defining and Committing to Sustainability

Sustainability means different things to different people. Within Sarasota County, we understand sustainability to mean stewardship of all our resources in such a way that we can meet the basic human need for a quality place to live today and leave a legacy of enhancement for future generations.

As government representatives, we are responsible for listening to the community and supporting its values. Sustainability was established as a priority in both the Sarasota County Commission's strategic plan and the county's Comprehensive Plan. It was reaffirmed by the community in conversations held in summer 2005. This support positions us well to lead efforts to reverse the damaging effects of environmental degradation and climate change within our jurisdiction, and to influence others to follow our example.

Going forward, we will have detailed conversations with the Sarasota County Commission to more precisely define our commitment to sustainability. In the recent Comprehensive Plan amendment cycle the commissioners strengthened our focus on becoming a sustainable and renewable community and since then have set some lofty goals for reducing the organization's carbon emissions. Workshops will be held to better understand how the Board envisions implementation of such policies and initiatives for our community.

The Commission has regulatory authority over many sources of impact, including land use, building codes, landfill operations, air quality monitoring, resource protection, procurement policies, and zoning and transportation policies. The Commission can also incentivize sustainable operating practices.

What does sustainability mean for us as an organization? It means accelerating our action at all levels. In the next year Sarasota County Government will define our sustainability goals, finalize action plans, and begin broad implementation. Every individual in the organization will be involved in shifting our organization into a mode of sustainable operations. To reach our ultimate destination of a sustainable and renewable community, we must increase the horsepower behind our approach. We have moved beyond identifying individual projects to implementation of broad inter-related initiatives crossing organizational and community boundaries.

This graphic depicts how everything we do to accomplish the Commission's strategic initiatives should revolve around a sustainability hub.

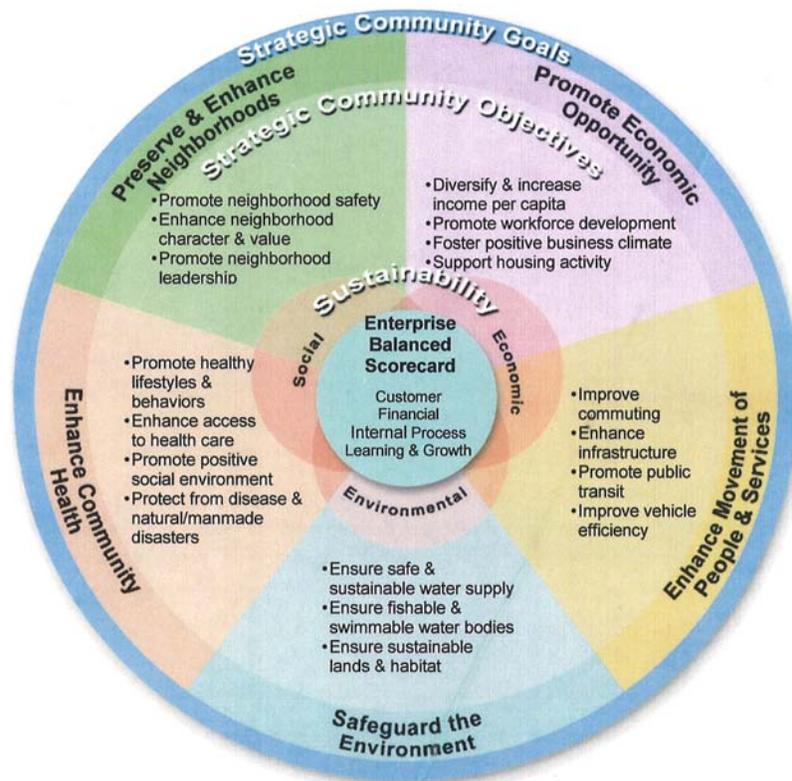
# Roadmap to Sustainability

## Community Strategic Focus The Roadbed of Operational Excellence

*In the beginning, there were seven BCC Strategic Initiatives:*

- Neighborhood Preservation/Enhancement
- Growth Management
- Water Resources Management
- Fiscal Sustainability
- Mobility
- Economic Development
- Human Services

*Now, we're Mobilizing for Action...*



Enterprise Management Education Series  
Enterprise Planning Sequence, Module #2: Understanding Balanced Scorecard and Enterprise Strategic Planning

This doesn't suggest we do it all or lead it all — there is a rich palette of opportunities for sharing the effort, and we can use our collective energy and intellect to evolve the best community solutions. The path to sustainability relies heavily upon the interconnectedness and interdependency of people and systems — and the process will be iterative. We don't have the answers today. We do have the will to discover them over time.

Our strategic initiatives, comprehensive plan policies, a balanced scorecard and business plans give us the tools to navigate, shepherd the discussions and lead with integrity as an organization. We can share what we know, initiate community dialogue and bring those who can help lead the change into the discussion. By doing so, we nurture the environment for change and help facilitate the movement toward a sustainable future.

# Roadmap to Sustainability

An essential step in moving Sarasota County forward will be deciding at what level we will support sustainability initiatives. Using U.S. Green Building Coalition LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) standards as an analogy, will need to define what levels we will seek – silver, gold or platinum. Workshops are planned in 2007 to digest the issues around sustainability and the investment it will require, and to solicit the board's perspective on our current body of work and prioritize those things we must address on the horizon.

Sarasota County will need to carefully examine the implementation challenges to our sustainability goals. As part of the examination, we will need to determine whether we want to pursue a "silver", "gold" or "platinum" level of service in creating a sustainable and renewable community. We recognize we may not be able to uniformly pursue platinum on each initiative but we must optimize our approach and ensure that what we do makes a difference – today, tomorrow and for life.

## What We've Accomplished

In 1985, Sarasota County embarked on a journey that would lead us toward becoming a more sustainable community. Over the past 20-plus years, through a variety of sometimes unrelated initiatives, we have significantly expanded the scope of the county's efforts, producing major developments such as:

- Reduced drinking water consumption per capita by 40 percent
- Preserved 16,000 acres of environmentally sensitive land
- Invested in the early stages of a green fleet
- Achieved Gold LEED building certification for two county buildings
- Added hybrid buses to the county transit system
- Adopted a Renewable Communities initiative
- Passed a Green Building Resolution to incentivize green building construction
- Launched Zero-energy, Plug-in Hybrid Electric Vehicle pilot projects

**In 2004, the Sarasota County Commission adopted the following goals:**

- *To see us develop an understanding of the concept of "sustainability" as the focal point of community development and community building, opening our minds to the tremendous balances that must be achieved, undaunted by the task.*
- *To see the big picture more often, recognizing that it is not today but tomorrow that we are influencing, that the good of the whole and tomorrow often outweigh the good of the individual and today. We will be judged by future generations on our ability to balance the equation.*

The same year, the county also took steps to determine our baseline values relative to resource consumption and environmental degradation, using an instrument called an Ecological Footprint Analysis. It measures humankind's use of nature based on biologically productive land area necessary to generate the resources used and to absorb the waste of that population. The analysis factors in local population, acreage, electricity use by source, number of vehicles, road miles, gasoline use, natural gas use, recycling, type, age and number of housing units, and biocapacity (area of different types of land). From this information are calculated energy, housing, transportation and recycling footprints. The technique is both analytical and educational, and can be quite helpful in decision-making. We can use the information to help direct sound planning efforts and establish sustainable goals.

# Roadmap to Sustainability

For example, Sarasota County's 2003 footprint data shows that our footprint is 22.2 acres per capita, slightly smaller than the average U.S. citizen's 24 acres per capita. To consider this in the broader context of consumption and production, the biocapacity of the planet is less than 5 acres per capita. Sarasota County's bio-capacity 2.1 acres per capita. The gap between what we consume and what we produce is significant.

**Sarasota County Average Footprint, in global acres per person**  
(numbers may not add due to rounding)

	Energy land	Crop land	Pasture	Forest	Built area	Fishing Grounds	Total
ENERGY	2.91	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	2.91
HOUSING	0.30	0.00	0.00	1.03	0.73	0.00	2.06
FOOD	1.71	3.38	0.44	0.00	0.00	0.63	6.16
GOODS&SERVICES	5.07	0.40	0.06	1.99	0.41	0.00	7.93
TRANSPORTATION	3.99	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.01	0.00	3.99
RECYCLING	-0.82	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	-0.82
<b>Total</b>	<b>13.16</b>	<b>3.78</b>	<b>0.50</b>	<b>3.02</b>	<b>1.14</b>	<b>0.63</b>	<b>22.23</b>

Recently, The National Association of Counties (NACo) recognized Sarasota County for the large number of pledges our employees signed to change one light in their homes to use a more energy-efficient compact fluorescent bulb. Although honored as the mid-size county with the most pledges in this campaign, our staff signed twice as many total pledges as a county more than double our size in population.

## Where We're Going

This community is unique for its open intellect, noble competitiveness and social courage. These qualities are reflected in the high standard it sets for cultural sophistication and a reputation for political and commercial progressiveness. We will require all of these to meet the challenges ahead.

**2030 Challenge** — In July 2006, the Sarasota County Commission adopted the American Institute of Architects 2030 Challenge to become carbon neutral by that date. It is an ambitious goal; we believe it was the right challenge to accept and we are up to the task. We will soon engage the entire organization to assess what implementation could mean in Sarasota County. Economic, social and environmental factors will be evaluated. The ecological benefit will be weighed against the financial requirements.

**Environmentally preferred procurement** — In the meantime, we should hold ourselves to standards that make a difference in real ways, one example of which is our procurement criteria. Sarasota County's power as a consumer of products is an important place to start. Our success will be dependent upon outcome-based management decisions: not only how and what we purchase, build and drive, but also how and what we plant, mow, irrigate and fertilize, as well as literally hundreds of other decisions. The environmental choices we make will be weighed and balanced with the economic and societal outcomes.

**Natural Capitalism** — We are also beginning to understand that the principles, or business model, on which the Industrial Revolution depended are no longer valid, and our society is doomed unless we dramatically alter our economic approach. Two hundred fifty years ago, society enjoyed an apparently endless supply of nature, but a shortage of people to perform labor. Today our shortages are not of people or tools, but of the things once abundantly

# Roadmap to Sustainability

supplied by the planet. Thus it is essential that we use nature more productively and utilize more of its benefits.

This new business model synergizes four major elements, as detailed in *Natural Capitalism: Creating the Next Industrial Revolution*, co-authored (with Paul Hawken and Hunter Lovins) by Rocky Mountain Institute CEO Amory B. Lovins.

1. **Radically increase the productivity of resource use.** Through fundamental changes in production design and technology, leading organizations are making natural resources stretch five, ten, even 100 times further than before. The resulting savings in operational costs, capital, and time quickly pay for themselves, and in many cases initial capital investments actually decrease.
2. **Shift to biologically inspired production (biomimicry) with closed loops, no waste, and no toxicity.** Natural Capitalism seeks not merely to reduce waste but also to eliminate the concept altogether. Closed-loop production systems, modeled on nature's designs, return every output harmlessly to the ecosystem or create valuable inputs for other manufacturing processes. Industrial processes that emulate nature's benign chemistry reduce dependence on nonrenewable inputs, eliminate waste and toxicity, and often allow more efficient production.
3. **Shift the business model away from the making and selling of "things" to providing the service that the "thing" delivers.** The business model of traditional manufacturing rests on the sporadic sale of goods. The Natural Capitalism model delivers value as a continuous flow of services—leasing an illumination service, for example, rather than selling light bulbs. This shift rewards both provider and consumer for delivering the desired service in ever cheaper, more efficient, and more durable ways. It also reduces inventory and revenue fluctuations and other risks.
4. **Reinvest in natural and human capital.** Any good capitalist reinvests in productive capital. Businesses are finding an exciting range of new cost-effective ways to restore and expand the natural capital directly required for operations and indirectly required to sustain the supply system and customer base.

Innovative organizations are already prospering from these four principles. Their leaders and employees are also feeling better about what they do. Eliminating unproductive tons, gallons, and kilowatt-hours makes it possible to invest in human capital—the people who foster the innovation that drives future success.

**Metrics and certifications** — It is not enough that we declare ourselves a sustainable community. We must also subject our processes and practices, achievements and performance to testing and verification by respected outside organizations. Where independent testing reveals organizational shortcomings, we must take remedial action to the extent practical. There are costs to bear with both testing and remediation. For any such determination, we would carefully weigh the costs and the benefits.

**The International Organization for Standardization (ISO)** — ISO has developed an environmental management portfolio of standards addressing specific environmental challenges. Its more than 350 international standards provide for monitoring the quality of air, water and soil, as well as noise and radiation. The ISO 14000 standards help organizations take a pro-active approach to environmental management issues. Although these are environmental management standards, they also apply to all aspects of business. The spectrum of options available to

# Roadmap to Sustainability

Sarasota County ranges from the low end including training all the way to a comprehensive approach that extends to process certification. Cost estimates for a large organization, defined as one with more than 1,000 employees, range up to \$250,000.

Two other highly regarded designations for us to pursue are:

**Florida Green Building Coalition's Florida Green Local Government Designation** — This designation recognizes and rewards communities for making environmental stewardship a priority in local government functions

**Audubon International Designation** — This designation is achieved through a broader community-focused effort. It stresses planning, making decisions and taking action while utilizing our community's assets and ultimately helping build a sense of place.

Achieving these designations not only boosts our credibility; it provides us a stronger voice in engaging others in the sustainability conversation and actions, and may also enhance our successful pursuit of funding opportunities through grants and partnerships.

The need to transition from an Office of Sustainability to a culture of sustainability is an organizational imperative if we are to meet the substantial goals we have established. In order to have credibility in our interactions with the community and others regarding their support for and adoption of sustainable strategies, it is essential that we "walk the talk."

## A Sustainable And Renewable Community

It is relatively easy to look back and see where we have been and the detours or breakdowns along the way. What is much more challenging is to take a focused, committed stance as we go forward, armed with a sense of purpose and a countywide ideal. Although we have been operating some sustainability programs, sustainability as a mindset has not yet been woven into our organizational fabric. It is time for that to change.

As stated earlier, we play a critical role as both consumers of the present and architects of the future. It is incumbent upon each of us, government and citizens alike, to focus anew on how we impact the living planet in everything we do. This begs a collaborative and holistic approach to sustainability. Our overall success is dependent upon engaging the organization and the community. To do so we must translate the "why" into a conversation that motivates each person to own the goals, action plans and outcomes.

First, we must create a climate that supports partnership, empowerment and ownership; to leverage ourselves into a credible position that garners support and validates our community leadership role. By actively engaging the community, we acknowledge the gifts they bring to the endeavor.

## Mapping the Route

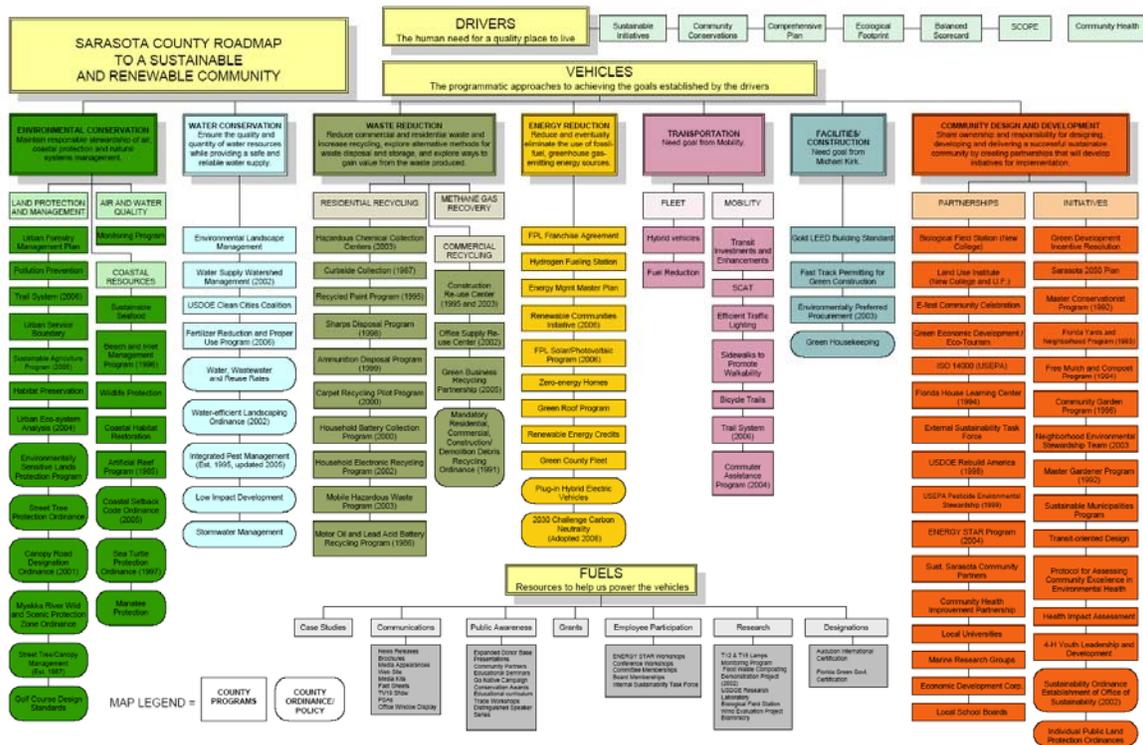
Our ultimate destination is a sustainable and renewable community. The journey is long and requires our meeting significant mile markers that include renewable communities, affordable green housing, alternative energy mass transit system, carbon neutrality and sustainable agriculture.

To help us navigate our journey, we have developed a roadmap with three key components:

# Roadmap to Sustainability

- The **“Drivers”** represent the human need for a quality place to live, an ethic of responsible behavior and a desire to make a positive difference. This need is translated into policies that establish the overarching goals for sustainability and tools to measure our progress, such as:
  - SCOPE report
  - Community Conversations
  - Strategic Initiatives
  - Comprehensive Plan
  - Balanced Scorecard
- The **“Vehicles”** include programmatic approaches to achieving the goals established by the drivers (e.g., sustainability policies, environmental conservation, energy reduction, waste reduction and others).
- The **“Fuels”** include resources to help us power the vehicles (fiscal sustainability, grants, conference workshops, public awareness, partnerships, case studies and research).

The graphic below is our roadmap. It reflects a comprehensive and integrated approach to multiple community, board and organizational strategies, outcomes and key activities, all intended to deliver a solid roadbed for a Sustainable Sarasota County. (A larger copy of this graphic is available as attachment **1 The Roadmap Chart.**)



## Action Plans ~ Action Teams

Many communities have made remarkable progress on sustainability initiatives, but appear to lack a cohesive community and organizational plan that is benchmarked. One exception is the innovative initiative launched across the entire Wal-Mart organization. What began as an effort to reverse a highly negative public image has since enabled the profitable retail giant to reduce its environmental impacts dramatically over the last few years by empowering cross-discipline teams to examine every

# Roadmap to Sustainability

element of the way they do business. They have reduced their demands of the planet at the same time they have found countless ways to save money and leave a better place behind. We can learn from their success. To the extent practical, we can model their paradigm for change, especially their teamwork approach.

We will implement and empower cross-discipline action teams in seven areas of major impact – Environmental Conservation, Water Conservation, Waste Reduction, Energy Reduction, Transportation, Facilities/Construction and Community Design and Partnerships. These teams will develop their own goals and measurements built around a core objective of sustainability, and they will be accountable for reaching those goals. Team goals will direct training, focus and harnessing of our collective energies for maximum results. Broad, general goals and outcomes are outlined below in each action category.

Our cross-disciplinary action teams will be developed throughout the enterprise to convert boxes on the Roadmap into preliminary action plans for accomplishing the goals. Using measurement standards such as ISO 14000 and the principle of Natural Capitalism as a guide, these action teams will determine the component steps to achieve the initiatives, the manpower and financial resources required, timeframes and challenges. They will also be charged with presenting the spectrum of implementation options ranging from small to larger scale service levels and making recommendations to the organization. The individual action plans will be consolidated into a Sustainability Master Plan for Sarasota County for consideration by the Sarasota County Commission to define how we will implement the roadmap as we move forward.

A critical piece of our transition into a culture of sustainability is to utilize the county's consumer power to reduce our ecological footprint and consumption of resources. The way to accomplish that is to institute Environmentally Preferred Procurement (EPP) and to shift our fleet away from gasoline-only engines. Two action teams that will operate on an accelerated schedule will be those for EPP and Fleet since our transition in these areas will substantially reduce our direct and indirect impacts on the planet and will also demonstrate we are in action, walking the talk of sustainability.

These performance measures will be an important aspect of the annual performance review process. Everyone in the organization will have responsibility for achievement of sustainability goals. Specific details are included in attachment **2 Action Plans ~ Action Teams** are included in attachment

## **Economic, Social and Environmental Balance**

The timeline to achieve the goals and efforts set forth in the Roadmap cannot be readily determined. We see wonderful opportunities for positive local change, but recognize that global and regional pressures may have dramatic impacts. Board direction will establish priorities so we can leverage existing resources with service levels. Economic drivers and other realities will be factored into those decisions. The “triple bottom line” of sustainability is the successful balance of economic, social and environmental considerations. Sarasota County cannot be successful at achieving the highest level if changes are not made to the dynamics of the program, which require a countywide push.

# Roadmap to Sustainability



As we focus on the long-range view, it is essential to keep in mind our community's "carrying capacity" relative to the four types of community capital: natural, human, social, and built. To leave a viable planet for future generations and create a place that is healthier both economically and socially for today's generations, it is incumbent upon government and citizens alike to focus anew on how we impact the living planet in everything we do. The products we buy, the cars we drive, the places we choose to live and work and play, all impact our environment, along with our cumulative behavior relative to consuming resources.

This is also a fiscal responsibility. The economic health and marketability of our community are based largely on aesthetics, services and the concurrent opportunities to operate a business and escape into nature. Health care expenses can be negatively impacted by health conditions (e.g., skin cancer, respiratory illnesses, vision problems.) that are induced or exacerbated by poor environmental quality. All Sarasota County residents can reap the physical rewards of a stewardship approach to environmental, economic and social impacts.

The better we understand our complex and ever-changing ecosystems, and how they influence people's livelihoods, the better prepared we are to understand how our actions as a society either promote or hinder more sustainable ways of living.

## Within Our Borders

Sarasota County has a unique opportunity to become a local, state and national model for sustainability. We have established a long and rich history of setting the performance bar ever higher. Our shared success going forward depends on empowered networks – within county government and throughout our community. It depends on open dialogue in collaborative settings. As we have seen the momentum grow over the past 10 years, this community is very receptive to sustainability concepts and practices. We have moved from the demonstration project that is Florida House Learning Center to private and nonprofit sectors building and operating green. Examples include the recently completed Holiday Inn hotel complex, the Girl Scout Regional Headquarters, and entire communities such as WCI Communities' Venetian Golf and River Club in Venice. We understand, as a community, that it is easier to build sustainable when you construct anew. We are challenged with learning more effective ways to retrofit existing neighborhoods, businesses and transportation systems.

To ensure smart growth throughout this county, it is important that we understand the future our community wants and then to design, build, live in and enjoy it. Key elements essential to this effort are already in place: 1) an informed, engaged, motivated community; 2) a forward-thinking private sector that has learned to create sustainable systems profitably and 3) a proactive government working continuously to evolve the way it works to provide the necessary infrastructure for a high performance community.

# Roadmap to Sustainability

## Beyond Our Borders

We must maximize our resources and efficiently structure our efforts to achieve our goals of organizational alignment around sustainability. By taking inventory of past accomplishments, evaluating the outcomes, establishing sustainability performance drivers, engaging the community and enhancing partnerships, Sarasota County can better create its own future as well as help to influence sustainability efforts beyond our borders.

Although our sustainability initiatives have been broadly recognized as progressive in Florida and even nationwide, we have not yet begun to address this issue with the intensity necessary to affect significant and lasting change. Our residents made clear during the Community Conversations in the summer of 2005 that the one thing they most value about Sarasota County is its environment, and the legacy they most want to leave is a healthy environment. It is our responsibility now to translate those residents' desires into a heightened state of action.

We must understand and accept that we cannot continue to alter the forces of nature without devastating effects. As rational beings, we are responsible for discovering new ways to respect and work with nature. As community leaders, it is our ethical imperative to find ways to evolve a better tomorrow.

We're on our way to a more sustainable future – together. We know it's not enough to consider just the start of the journey; we need to explore the impacts along the entire road ahead. The paradigm and the culture must shift. As we have learned, sustainability is not an office or a movement – it is a way of life.

***Note: For additional information regarding specific sustainability activities within Sarasota County, please see the attached file folder entitled "SRQ\_IG\_SupportMaterials\_07."***