



The Alliance for Innovation is accepting applications from local governments that are interested in presenting during the 14<sup>th</sup> Annual

Transforming Local Government (TLG) conference, June 4-6, 2008 in Greenville, SC. The theme for the 2008 conference is **Creating Sustainable Futures: Global Issues/Local Solutions.**

## 2008 Presentation Categories

Submit a successful program, project or initiative in one of the following categories:

- Environment
- Economy
- Social Equity and Community
- Planning, Urban Design, Infrastructure
- Organization and Finance



Please submit the following to the Alliance for Innovation in electronic format **only**:

- A cover sheet with the information requested (below)
- A synopsis describing your project or service
- Answers to the "Components of Your Presentation" questions

In addition to a one-page synopsis, please answer the following "Components of Your Presentation" questions.



### Components of Your Presentation

#### Innovation/Creativity

How did you unleash or encourage creativity in order to generate solutions? What ideas or opportunities emerged during your creative process? How did your program/concept stretch or improve the boundaries of ordinary governmental operations?

#### Quality Management

What quality management principles, tools, and procedures were applied to your service delivery?

**APPLY TODAY!**  
**Deadline: Friday, August 31, 2007**

#### Value Proposition

What customer needs and expectations were identified and fulfilled? How did your initiative improve access to your government? How has the health of your community improved as a result?

#### Building Organizational Capacity

How did you remove the barriers to innovation? If you incorporated critical thinking and problem solving techniques, explain your execution process. If your project involved teams, describe the level of autonomy, i.e. setting goals, HR function, budget authority, etc. What technological barriers did your organization overcome?

#### Management Philosophy and Culture

What philosophy, literature, or body of research influenced your service delivery? How is it evident in your program/concept?

#### Integrated Processes and Reengineering with the Use of Technology

What new technologies were necessary and what methods and/or applications did you incorporate? What business processes were used during the development of your program/concept? Was an outside consultant used? If yes, please indicate the level of involvement and identify the firm.

#### Applicable Results and Real World Advice (required)

What are the applications you could share, that would be of value to other local governments (minimum of three)? What are the results/outcomes? If performance measures were used, indicate what they were within the category of qualitative, quantitative, efficiency, effectiveness, or workload statistics.

#### Submission

Applications are screened and each applying team will be interviewed. Selected entries will be notified by: Friday, October 31, 2007.

**Please submit your information in electronic format to: [tlgconference@transformgov.org](mailto:tlgconference@transformgov.org).**

## COVER SHEET

### Presentation Category (Please Select One)

- Environment                       Economy                       Social Equity and Community  
 Planning, Urban Design, Infrastructure     Organization and Finance

Title of Presentation: Initiating a Sustainability Program: Building the Foundation For Success

Jurisdiction: Municipal Government                      Project Leader: Nicole Woodman

Presentation Team Members (if known) Rebecca Sayers

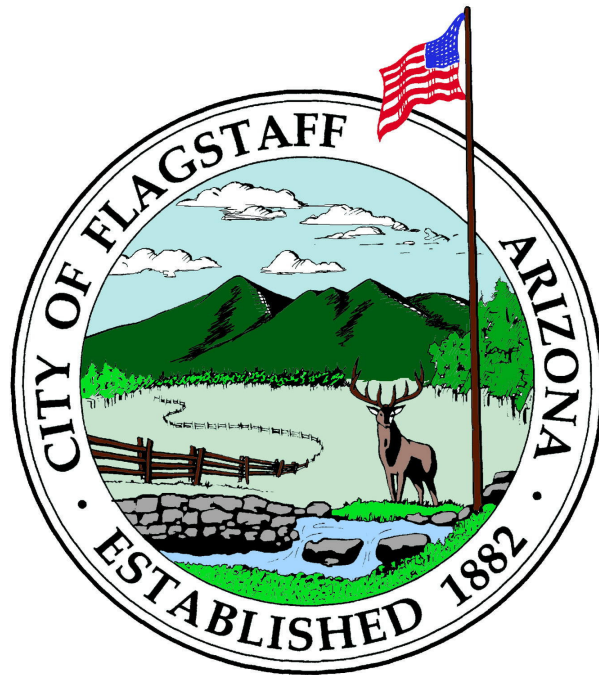
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# City of Flagstaff, Arizona



## Initiating a Sustainability Program in Local Government: Building the Foundation for Success

Alliance for Innovation  
2008 TLG Conference Application  
Environment Case Study  
August 30, 2007



## Synopsis

The City of Flagstaff, Arizona is committed to high standards for the protection and improvement of the region's quality of life offered by its natural resources and natural environment. The City has a strong history of dedicating financial resources to a variety of conservation efforts. By endorsing the US Mayors Climate Protection Agreement and committing to reducing greenhouse gas emissions, the City of Flagstaff recognized the need to promote sustainability within the municipality and throughout the Flagstaff community.

The City embraced this unique opportunity to build on the existing momentum of its conservation efforts and its new commitment to sustainability. The City was poised to establish an independent Sustainability Program; a program dedicated to promoting sustainable living and providing practical solutions through program and policy development.

The City of Flagstaff's Sustainability Program aspires to be a model for other municipalities. In doing so program staff has worked diligently to research, create and document the process for initiating a Sustainability Program and building the foundation for success.

## Innovation/Creativity

How would the City of Flagstaff effectively build its new Sustainability Program and transform itself so that its vision of sustainability drives everyday decision making and defines short and long term successes? The course is beset with obstacles, however transformation will come when processes are designed to be more economically, socially and ecologically beneficial. Through an effective governance system, innovative policy and program development, and effective forward-looking leadership the City of Flagstaff will be able to create a culture of sustainability-based thinking, values and behavior.

The Sustainability Program identified a basic development strategy to begin building its program foundation. The overarching strategies include:

- Understand the core elements of sustainability
  - The five R's of sustainability: redesign, replace, reduce, refine and recirculate
- Build the case for sustainability
  - Economic, social and environmental benefits
- Recognize sustainability must focus on cultural change
  - Rational theory for change
- Create the change
  - The imperative of achieving sustainability
  - Organize transition teams
  - Develop new strategies
  - Improve the information flow



Applying these strategies staff developed a first year action plan to provide a strategic framework. From this plan the Sustainability Program set forth to develop a comprehensive and innovative program.

Goal	Action Steps
<i>1. Identify Sustainability Program's mission</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify City's definition of sustainability</li> <li>• Develop City's sustainability policy statement</li> <li>• Align program with City Council priorities</li> </ul>
<i>2. Foster collaborative, interdepartmental effort to identify, promote and integrate sustainable practices and resource efficiency into municipal operations</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Convene a City staffed Sustainability Leadership Team</li> <li>• Conduct a baseline inventory of sustainability practices within City operations</li> <li>• Work closely with all departments to identify opportunities for sustainable policies and programs</li> </ul>
<i>3. Identify and Establish Sustainability Program Goals</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop guiding principles</li> <li>• Develop overarching goals</li> </ul>
<i>4. Initiate efforts to comply with the US Mayor's Climate Protection Agreement</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Determine best process for climate mitigation.</li> <li>• Conduct baseline inventory of greenhouse gas emissions</li> <li>• Mitigation plan development and draft management plan – plan to be incorporated in to Sustainability Plan</li> </ul>
<i>5. Draft Sustainability Plan</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop Sustainability Plan</li> <li>• Request input from the Sustainability Commission and Sustainability Leadership Team</li> <li>• Request input from the Flagstaff community</li> </ul>
<i>6. Foster cross-sector partnerships</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop and continue to develop working relationships with all sectors of the greater Flagstaff community</li> <li>• Attend and participate in local and regional seminars, workshops, conferences, and public meetings</li> <li>• Utilize existing and identify new communication mediums to conduct community and business outreach</li> </ul>

As an example of how the goals above lend themselves to innovation the Sustainability Leadership Team is one of three employee advisory teams within the City of Flagstaff. The team is the City's sustainability "think tank." The team is encouraged to actively communicate, share ideas, and stretch the boundaries of business as usual.

## Quality Management

The Sustainability Program adheres to a policy of accessibility, transparency and accountability. The program seeks approval and oversight of policy and program development from senior staff and the Flagstaff City Council. The program reports weekly to staff and Council on program progress. Weekly reports are distributed to a community listserv and are made available to the public through the City website. Quarterly and annual reports are submitted to senior staff and City Council.

The Sustainability Leadership Team, as described above, provides insight into departmental operations and offers valuable information regarding the impact of the Sustainability Plan on



their respective operations. A community feedback loop is encouraged through the citizen seated Sustainability Commission. Commission meetings are held monthly and are open to the public. Both teams work to ensure that the Sustainability Plan is regularly examined, measured and dynamic.

The Sustainability Plan will be reported annually to City Council, City staff and the Flagstaff community. The report is intended to provide useful information on the progress of the Sustainability Plan as well as a means to regularly examine its effectiveness in a dynamic environment.

## **Value Proposition**

The Sustainability Program is fostering partnerships with all sectors of the Flagstaff community; building capacity among businesses, institutions, community organizations, and individuals. The Sustainable Living Lecture Series, a free monthly lecture designed to raise awareness of local and global sustainability issues, is just one example. The series is a collaboration between the Sustainability Program, Coconino County, Northern Arizona University and Willow Bend Environmental Educational Center. The Sustainability Program also partners with various organizations to bring the Sustainable Living Fair to the community. The annual fair focuses on community education about sustainable choices and fun – an outreach to people of all ages. Furthering the mission of partnerships the program is actively involved with the Coconino County Sustainable Building Program. Together this effort has helped bring forward updated energy code and increased interest in sustainable building science.

The Sustainability Program has been well received throughout the community and continues to earn praise for its work within municipal operations and in greater Flagstaff. Program staff is regularly invited to speak at engagements or participate in public events and sits on multiple community organizational boards and strategic planning groups. The Sustainability Program has also developed an informative website that provides pertinent information on elements of the program including the sustainability plan, climate management (although part of the sustainability plan, climate management needs to be analyzed independently for reporting to the US Mayors Climate Protection Agreement), City baseline sustainability inventory, the Sustainability Commission, and useful resources.

The City of Flagstaff and the community are equally vested in their interdependent futures. The health of the community is mirrored in the Sustainability Program's definition of sustainability; living and managing activities in a manner that balances social, economic, environmental and institutional considerations to meet our needs and those of future generations. In practice, a sustainable Flagstaff is a place where the social well-being of current and future citizens is supported by a vibrant economy and a self-renewing, healthy environment. Through community education and outreach the Sustainability Program promotes a culture of sustainability and encourages long-term change. Staff believes the program is a vehicle to invaluable services provided by the City of Flagstaff.



## Building Organizational Capacity

The Sustainability Program strives to foster collaborative, interdepartmental relationships that promote and integrate sustainable practices into municipal operations. The Program works with all City departments to cultivate strong relationships, educate and build capacity. As described previously, the Sustainability Leadership Team, which is made up of representatives from all City departments, works closely with the Sustainability Program to develop and maintain the City's Sustainability Plan. Through innovative policy and program development and assessment the team develops a strong sense of ownership and enthusiasm.

In developing the team, program staff prepared a strategy to keep the team focused, enthusiastic and moving forward by establishing rational and clarity of purpose. Following are examples of the kick-off meetings' goals:

### Meeting 1 Phase 1

- Describe project background
- Define roles and responsibilities
- Review work plan

### Meeting 2 Phase 2

- Review baseline inventory draft
- Discuss methods and options
- Review preliminary plan structure

## Management Philosophy and Culture

Throughout the United States numerous municipalities have committed to sustainability efforts. The City of Flagstaff's program has benefited from their documented successes and lessons learned. A variety of programs in particular have influenced Flagstaff; they are City of Santa Monica, California; City of Fort Collins, Colorado; City of Boulder, Colorado; City of Portland, Oregon; and City of Seattle, Washington. Their influence is evident in all aspects of the Sustainability Program. Perhaps the most significant is Santa Monica's sustainability plan, which the City of Flagstaff's Sustainability Plan is modeled after. Their work has been instrumental in identifying Flagstaff's goal areas: resource conservation; environmental and public health; transportation; economic development; open space and land use; housing; community education and human dignity. The City has also adopted Santa Monica's plan format and reporting mechanism, a user friendly report card.

Bob Deppelt's *Leading Change Toward Sustainability: A Change-Management Guide for Business, Government and Civil Society*, has been important for identifying the framework for strategy development. Deppelt's research provides a review and analysis of successes and failures within the sustainability movement.

## Integrated Process

In September 2006 City of Flagstaff Mayor Joe Donaldson signed the U.S. Mayors Climate Protection Agreement, a voluntary commitment to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. Under the Agreement, Flagstaff has committed to meet or beat the Kyoto Protocol targets and reduce locally generated GHG emissions seven percent from 1990 levels by 2012. To assist in meeting this goal, the City of Flagstaff hired a consultant to conduct a



comprehensive inventory of GHG emissions and assist with the development of a comprehensive GHG management program that addresses City municipal operations and the Flagstaff community.

Scope of services conducted by the consultant:

1. Complete a comprehensive GHG inventory for City of Flagstaff municipal operations and the Flagstaff community.
2. Identify GHG mitigation strategies that emphasize GHG reduction potential and cost-effectiveness, and develop a comprehensive climate management plan.
3. Produce a final report that identifies historical and projected anthropogenic GHG inventory and a separate comprehensive climate management plan.
4. Provide an inventory maintenance system for City of Flagstaff management to monitor and track emissions reductions, measures and cost savings.

## **Applicable Result and Real World Advice**

The Sustainability Program believes its application in developing a transparent and accessible program, development of municipal and community collaborative efforts, and developing support from City Council and senior staff would be of value to other local governments. Further discussion of the development and monitoring of the Sustainability Plan would prove beneficial.

As previously mentioned the City of Flagstaff's Sustainability Program aims to be a model for others. To date the program has assisted numerous municipalities and communities with program development and staffing recommendations including: Bisbee, Arizona; Dubuque, Iowa; Pima County, Arizona; Prescott, Arizona; and Sedona, Arizona.