



City of Winston-Salem

2017

STAR Sustainability Recommendations Report

City of Winston-Salem Office of Sustainability

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Contents

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY 2

BACKGROUND 2

PRIORITY RECOMMENDATIONS..... 3

SECONDARY RECOMMENDATIONS..... 6

APPENDIX A..... 9

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Office of Sustainability has prepared this report at the request of City Council and city management. It is meant to be used as a supplement to the 2017-2021 Strategic Plan and provide measurable outcomes for the identified priorities. The suggestions are organized under the same goal areas as the strategic plan, with a section for additional secondary recommendations. There is also a short overview of the points earned in the relevant objectives before each recommendation section. We have chosen to align the STAR measures with those of the 2017 – 2021 Strategic Plan of the City due to the parallel timelines. The recertification of Winston-Salem as a STAR Community will fall in early 2021, which corresponds to the short term goals of the strategic plan.

All of these recommendations come directly from the STAR framework. They have been identified in one of two ways. The initial priorities were identified by municipal government and community stakeholders through a series of workshops held during summer 2017. These priorities come from those fifteen objectives which have the most room for improvement. The secondary recommendations come from their relevance to the outcomes, strategies, and/or action items in the strategic plan. The hope is that City Council and others will look at the suggested STAR actions as ways to achieve the already identified priorities and use them as ways to measure progress.

The recommendations have been organized with the relevant priority from the Strategic Plan in italics citing the direct measure, followed by the recommendations from STAR listed as the following bullets. The appendix cites the specific references and locations in the STAR framework for each of the recommendations.

While some of these actions may be being done by a local organization, STAR only awards credit for those actions being done by the government itself, either at the city or county level. This may help explain why certain actions remain on our recommendation list.

BACKGROUND

In May of 2016, the City of Winston-Salem Office of Sustainability began work on the STAR Communications program. This program is a way for local municipalities to assess, set targets and measure progress in the sustainability field every four years. The first assessment portion of this program was completed officially in February 2017, resulting in the City of Winston-Salem being rated as a 3-STAR Community. The next step now becomes setting targets for the future. This recommendation plan will present specific actions and steps to reach those targets identified based on the priorities of the 2017-2021 Strategic Plan recently released by the City of Winston-Salem Performance and Accountability department.

Recommendations come from each of the seven goal areas of the STAR framework in order to not only increase the overall score, but to increase the scores of the individual goal areas. By the time we start the recertification process, the goal will be to have improved in all goal areas. Those with the biggest opportunities for growth are Climate & Energy, Equity¹ & Empowerment and Natural Systems. This is why many primary recommendations will come from these goal areas.

¹ Equity is defined by STAR as the following: Sustainable communities allocate resources and opportunities fairly so that all people who do the full range of jobs that a community needs can thrive in it. Local governments in these communities actively eliminate barriers to full participation in community life and work to correct past injustices.

PRIORITY RECOMMENDATIONS

These recommendations come from relevant objectives from the fifteen previously indicated objectives.

LIVABLE NEIGHBORHOODS

Relevant objectives:

Aging in the Community – 0 out of 15 points.²

Recommendations:

1. *Strategic Plan Objective 2:* Expand housing assistance programs
 - a. Adopt an action-based plan to identify priority service needs and resources to address the current and future needs of older residents.
 - b. Establish a Commission on Aging to oversee community outreach and data collection efforts.
 - c. Allocate staff time to focus on planning and programming for a maturing population.

HEALTHY ENVIRONMENT

Relevant objectives:

Transportation Choices – 1.3 out of 20 points.

Environmental Justice³ – 0 out of 20 points.

Green Infrastructure⁴ – 0 out of 20 points.

Climate Adaptation – 0 out of 15 points.

Greenhouse Gas Mitigation – 3.2 out of 20 points.

Recommendations:

1. *Strategic Plan Strategy 3.2:* Create developer incentives for green and transit-oriented development
 - a. Increase the percentage of households with access to public transit. (Assess the percentage of households with access to public transit)
2. *Strategic Plan Strategy 3.1:* Evaluate sustainability needs based on STAR Community Rating
 - a. Adopt an environmental justice or social equity plan that includes strategies to reduce negative impacts and burdens to low-income populations and persons of color.
 - b. Create an Environmental Justice Collaborative Group.

² This objective is new to the STAR framework and has therefore not been previously assessed. This is why the starting point value will be zero.

³ STAR defines Environmental Justice as The fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all people regardless of race, color, sex, national origin, or income with respect to the development, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies. Environmental justice can also refer to a social movement in the United States whose focus is on the fair distribution of environmental benefits and burdens.

⁴ Green Infrastructure is defined by STAR as an interconnected system of natural areas and open space that conserves ecosystem values, helps sustain clean air and water, and provides benefits to people and wildlife.

- c. Provide information and education to the public regarding environmental justice conditions and available programs and services to alleviate disproportionate impact.
- d. Increase the percentage or land area dedicated to green stormwater infrastructure that provides bioretention and infiltration services.
- e. Create a communitywide green infrastructure plan that is integrated with other relevant local plans.
- f. Establish a green infrastructure monitoring program and regularly report on status of desired outcomes.
- g. Demonstrate incremental progress towards achieving a 28% reduction by 2025 and/or an 80% reduction by 2050 in communitywide greenhouse gas emissions.
- h. Conduct a communitywide GHG inventory at least every five years.
- i. Create an education and outreach campaign to engage residents and businesses in GHG reduction efforts.

QUALITY TRANSPORTATION

Relevant objectives:

Transportation Choices – 1.3 out of 20

Recommendations:

1. *Strategic Plan Strategy 1.3*: Evaluate handicapped parking options.
 - a. Construct or retrofit transportation infrastructure to meet standards in the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).
2. *Strategic Plan Strategy 3.2*: Enhance multi-modal transportation options and regional connectivity.
 - a. Conduct early development reviews of subdivisions and other developments that include an analysis of destinations within ½ mile of project borders and multi-modal access routes.
3. *Strategic Plan Objective 2*: Expand Bike/Sidewalk/Greenway network.
 - a. Demonstrate at least a 5% increase in the past three years in the mileage of sidewalks, particularly on arterial or collector roads, that connect people with destinations.
 - b. Demonstrate a 10% increase in the past three years in the mileage of striped or buffered bicycle lanes, cycle-tracks, parallel off-street paths and/or other dedicated facilities.

SERVICE EXCELLENCE

Relevant objectives:

Civic Engagement – 2.6 out of 15 points.

Recommendations:

1. *Strategic Plan Strategy 1.1*: Close feedback loop with citizens.
 - a. Collect and maintain public engagement records including public meeting attendance and participation on formal boards and commissions.

- b. Adopt inclusive public engagement guidelines to local government agencies and departments
- c. Provide training on the adopted public engagement guidelines to local government agencies and departments
- d. Establish regular, ongoing opportunities for elected officials and/or senior government staff to meet with residents to answer questions and listen to concerns. This cannot include City Council meetings.

SECONDARY RECOMMENDATIONS

These recommendations come from remaining thirty objectives of the STAR framework.

ECONOMIC VITALITY AND DIVERSITY

Relevant objectives:

Workforce Readiness – 10.3 out of 15 points.

Recommendations:

1. *Strategic Plan Objective 4:* Enhance skills of the workforce.
 - a. Create data sharing agreements between local governments, private sector employers, and educational entities to maximize the availability and use of data in economic and workforce development planning.
 - b. Produce an annual report that tracks workforce readiness performance measures.
2. *Strategic Plan Strategy 4.1:* Partner with workforce development training initiatives
 - a. Invest in community college or other credential-granting program facilities and capital improvements to accommodate residents and members of the local workforce.

SAFE AND SECURE COMMUNITY

Relevant objectives:

Emergency Response – 10.8 out of 15 points.

Safe Communities – 11.1 out of 15 points.

Civil & Human Rights – 3 out of 10 points.

Recommendations:

1. *Strategic Plan Action item 1.1.5:* Provide officer training in implicit bias, community policing, and other community relations strategies.
 - a. Provide training for police officers focused on implicit bias, cultural responsiveness, and non-discrimination.
 - Human Resources, Police Department
2. *Strategic Plan Action item 1.1.6:* Continue to develop outreach efforts to specific populations
AND
Strategic Plan Action item 1.1.7: Expand existing community policing programs such as Trust Talks, Walk and Talk, and Community Priority Patrolling.
 - a. Educate community members about public safety and law enforcement programs and strategies.
 - b. Integrate community policing and procedural justice into police department operations to support and build trust within the community.
3. *Strategic Plan Objective 2:* Reduce crime and fear of crime.

- a. Conduct a survey of community perceptions of safety recognizing that some crimes are not reported and to illuminate safety issues that need to be addressed. Bonus: Survey includes detailed analysis of geographic variances in safety perceptions.
4. *Strategic Plan Strategy 2.1:* Strengthen re-entry and diversion initiatives.
 - a. Create or support a multi-faceted, monitored reentry program for ex-offenders that includes training, education mentoring, and employment opportunities and other support services to reduce recidivism.
 5. *Strategic Plan Objective 3:* Improve public safety service quality.
 - a. Perform ongoing data collection, evaluation, and monitoring from multiple agencies to track trends and identify emerging community needs.
 6. *Strategic Plan Strategy 3.2:* Reinforce emergency disaster preparedness
 - a. Develop a NIMS-compliant local inventory of assets and resources available for emergency response and mutual aid requests.
 - b. Adopt a local comprehensive plan for emergency response that includes provisions for evacuating low-income, disabled, and other persons likely to need assistance.
 - c. Perform an annual review or assessment of plans, procedures, resources, and trainings based on emergency response incidents and demands.
 - d. Distribute emergency kits or supplies to low-income and vulnerable residents before an event occurs.

LIVABLE NEIGHBORHOODS

Relevant objectives:

Housing Affordability – 4.4 out of 15 points.

Infill & Redevelopment – 4.9 out of 10 points.

Arts & Culture – 6.5 out of 15 points.

Historic Preservation – 6.4 out of 10 points.

Recommendations:

1. *Strategic Plan Strategy 1.2:* Create infill development design standards
AND
Strategic Plan Strategy 1.3: Create guidelines and incentives for disposition of vacant lots.
 - a. Use regulatory and design strategies to encourage compatible infill and redevelopment with a mix of housing types in neighborhoods close to employment centers, commercial areas, and where transit or transportation alternatives exist.
 - b. Perform proactive zoning enforcement and vacant lot cleanup or maintenance to improve the attractiveness of a redevelopment or blighted area and to deter crime.
2. *Strategic Plan Objective 2:* Expand housing assistance programs.
 - a. Develop a comprehensive housing strategy.
3. *Strategic Plan Strategy 3.1:* Support public art/community appearance.

- a. Adopt a percent-for-art policy requiring a percentage of the cost of new major development projects, public works projects, or capital improvement projects go to public art.
 - b. Require classes that advance arts education within the core curriculum in all public elementary and middle schools (k-8) AND provide special annual programming that brings artists into schools or brings students to art venues.
4. *Strategic Plan Objective 4: Preserve historic resources*
- a. Increase over time the annual number of eligible structures, sites, and landscapes designated as local historic landmarks, added to local historic districts, and/or rehabilitated restored, or converted through adaptive reuse.

HEALTHY ENVIRONMENT

Relevant objectives:

Compact & Complete Communities – 6.7 out of 20 points.

Waste Minimization – 6.5 out of 15 points.

Water in the Environment – 6.2 out of 20 points.

Recommendations:

1. *Strategic Plan Strategy 1.1: Design guidelines for mixed-use development.*
 - a. Adopt a specific mobility or circulation plan for compact, mixed development.
 - b. Adopt regulatory strategies that permit or incentivize increased residential and employment densities and diverse uses in transit-served areas and areas identified for compact, mixed-use development.
2. *Strategic Plan Action Item 3.2.1: Provide additional study of parking requirements for transit development.*
 - a. Adopt advanced parking strategies in transit-served areas and areas identified for compact, mixed-use development.
3. *Strategic Plan Strategy 3.3: Provide additional recycling education programming*
AND
Strategic Plan Objective 5: Develop comprehensive solid waste management strategies.
 - a. Create a public education campaign or a focused outreach effort to inform residents and businesses of their roles in achieving waste reduction targets.
 - b. Implement communitywide incentives or enforce regulations ensuring that residents and businesses are working toward community waste reductions targets.
4. *Strategic Plan Objective 4: Manage water quality and quantity.*
 - a. Conduct a Watershed Health and Vulnerability Assessment of local waterways.
 - b. Adopt a watershed management plan that integrates natural water bodies with human water use and addresses inputs and outputs of the water systems.

APPENDIX A

Recommendations with STAR measures listed

PRIORITY RECOMMENDATIONS

LIVABLE NEIGHBORHOODS

Relevant Objectives:

Aging in the Community (EAC-6) – 0 out of 15 points

Recommendations:

Strategic Plan Objective 2: Expand housing assistance programs.

- STAR measure EAC-6, Action 2 – Adopt an action-based plan to identify priority service needs and resources to address the current and future needs of older residents.
- STAR measure EAC-6, Action 5 – Establish a Commission on Aging to oversee community outreach and data collection efforts.
- STAR measure EAC-6, Action 6 – Allocate staff time to focus on planning and programming for a maturing population.

HEALTHY ENVIRONMENT

Relevant Objectives:

Transportation Choices (BE-7) – 1.3 out of 20 points.

Environmental Justice (EE-3) – 0 out of 20 points.

Recommendations:

Strategic Plan Strategy 3.2: Create developer incentives for green and transit-oriented development

- STAR measure BE-7, Action 5 – Offer local government employees incentives to commute by modes other than single-occupancy vehicles.
- STAR measure BE-7, Action 7 – Increase the percentage of households with access to public transit.

Strategic Plan Strategy 3.1: Evaluate sustainability needs based on STAR Community Rating

- STAR measure EE-3, Action 2 – Adopt an environmental justice or social equity plan that includes strategies to reduce negative impacts and burdens to low-income populations and persons of color.
- STAR measure EE-3, Action 3 – Create an Environmental Justice Collaborative Group.
- STAR measure EE-3, Action 4 – Provide information and education to the public regarding environmental justice conditions and available programs and services to alleviate disproportionate impact.
- STAR measure NS-1, Outcome 1 – Increase the percentage or land area dedicated to green stormwater infrastructure that provides bioretention and infiltration services.
- STAR measure NS-1, Action 1 – Assess the state of the jurisdiction’s urban forest.
- STAR measure NS-1, Action 2 – Create a communitywide green infrastructure plan that is integrated with other relevant local plans.

- STAR measure NS-1, Action 7 – Establish a green infrastructure monitoring program and regularly report on status of desired outcomes.
- STAR measure CE-1, Action 1 – Conduct a local climate risk and vulnerability assessment.
- STAR measure CE-1, Action 5 – Develop an interdisciplinary committee for the purpose of understanding and addressing climate vulnerabilities.
- STAR measure CE-1, Action 6 – Create an education and outreach campaign to engage residents, businesses, and local government staff in climate change vulnerability reduction efforts.
- STAR measure CE-1, Action 7 – Develop metrics for measuring the success of adaptation actions to prepare for a changing climate.
- STAR measure CE-2, Outcome 1 – Demonstrate incremental progress towards achieving a 28% reduction by 2025 and/or an 80% reduction by 2050 in communitywide greenhouse gas emissions.
- STAR measure CE-2, Action 1 – Conduct a communitywide GHG inventory at least every five years.
- STAR measure CE-2, Action 4 – Create an education and outreach campaign to engage residents and businesses in GHG reduction efforts.

QUALITY TRANSPORTATION

Relevant objectives:

Transportation Choices (BE-7) – 1.3 out of 20

Recommendations:

Strategic Plan Strategy 1.3: Evaluate handicapped parking options.

- STAR measure BE-7, Action 11 – Construct or retrofit transportation infrastructure to meet standards in the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

Strategic Plan Strategy 3.2: Enhance multi-modal transportation options and regional connectivity.

- STAR measure BE-7, Action 4 – Conduct early development reviews of subdivisions and other developments that include an analysis of destinations within ½ mile of project borders and multi-modal access routes.

Strategic Plan Strategy 3.1: Review Winston-Salem Transit Authority (WSTA) route frequency and funding.

- STAR measure BE-7, Action 7 – Increase the percentage of households with access to public transit.

Strategic Plan Objective 2: Expand Bike/Sidewalk/Greenway network.

- STAR measure BE-7, Action 8 – Increase the mileage of sidewalks, particularly on arterial or collector roads, that connect people with destinations.
- STAR measure BE-7, Action 9 – Increase the mileage of striped or buffered bicycle lanes, cycle-tracks, parallel off-street paths and/or other dedicated facilities.
- STAR measure HS-1, Action 9 – Implement a local enhancement program that systematically improves at least 3 bicycle and pedestrian amenities communitywide.

SERVICE EXCELLENCE

Relevant objectives:

Civic Engagement (EE-1) – 2.6 out of 15 points.

Recommendations:

Strategic Plan Strategy 1.1: Close feedback loop with citizens.

- STAR measure EE-1, Action 1 – Collect and maintain public engagement records including public meeting attendance and participation on formal boards and commissions.
- STAR measure EE-1, Action 3 – Adopt inclusive public engagement guidelines to local government agencies and departments
- STAR measure EE-1, Action 6 – Provide training on the adopted public engagement guidelines to local government agencies and departments
- STAR measure EE-1, Action 7 – Establish regular, ongoing opportunities for elected officials and/or senior government staff to meet with residents to answer questions and listen to concerns. This cannot include City Council meetings.

SECONDARY RECOMMENDATIONS

ECONOMIC VITALITY AND DIVERSITY

Relevant objectives:

Workforce Readiness (EAC-6) – 10.3 out of 15 points.

Recommendations:

Strategic Plan Objective 4: Enhance skills of the workforce.

- STAR measure EJ-6, Action 5 – Create data sharing agreements between local governments, private sector employers, and educational entities to maximize the availability and use of data in economic and workforce development planning.
- STAR measure EJ-6, Action 6 – Produce an annual report that tracks workforce readiness performance measures.

Strategic Plan Strategy 4.1: Partner with workforce development training initiatives

- STAR measure EJ-6, Action 9 – Invest in community college or other credential-granting program facilities and capital improvements to accommodate residents and members of the local workforce.

SAFE AND SECURE COMMUNITY

Relevant objectives:

Emergency Management & Response (HS-3) – 10.8 out of 15 points.

Safe Communities (HS-7) – 11.1 out of 15 points.

Civil & Human Rights (EE-2) – 3 out of 10 points.

Recommendations:

Strategic Plan Action item 1.1.5: Provide officer training in implicit bias, community policing, and other community relations strategies.

- STAR measure EE-2, Action 6 – Provide training for police officers focused on implicit bias, cultural responsiveness, and non-discrimination.

Strategic Plan Action item 1.1.6: Continue to develop outreach efforts to specific populations
AND

Strategic Plan Action item 1.1.7: Expand existing community policing programs such as Trust Talks, Walk and Talk, and Community Priority Patrolling.

- STAR measure HS-7, Action 3 – Educate community members about public safety and law enforcement programs and strategies.
- STAR measure HS-7, Action 7 – Integrate community policing and procedural justice into police department operations to support and build trust within the community.

Strategic Plan Objective 2: Reduce crime and fear of crime.

- STAR measure HS-7, Action 1 – Conduct a survey of community perceptions of safety recognizing that some crimes are not reported and to illuminate safety issues that need to be addressed. Bonus: Survey includes detailed analysis of geographic variances in safety perceptions.

Strategic Plan Strategy 2.1: Strengthen re-entry and diversion initiatives.

- STAR measure HS-7, Action 11 – Create or support a multi-faceted, monitored reentry program for ex-offenders that includes training, education mentoring, and employment opportunities and other support services to reduce recidivism.

Strategic Plan Objective 3: Improve public safety service quality.

- STAR measure HS-7, Action 6 – Perform ongoing data collection, evaluation, and monitoring from multiple agencies to track trends and identify emerging community needs.

Strategic Plan Strategy 3.2: Reinforce emergency disaster preparedness

- STAR measure HS-3, Action 1 – Develop a NIMS-compliant local inventory of assets and resources available for emergency response and mutual aid requests.
- STAR measure HS-3, Action 5 – Adopt a local comprehensive plan for emergency response that includes provisions for evacuating low-income, disabled, and other persons likely to need assistance.
- STAR measure HS-3, Action 7 – Perform an annual review or assessment of plans, procedures, resources, and trainings based on emergency response incidents and demands.
- STAR measure HS-3, Action 10 – Distribute emergency kits or supplies to low-income and vulnerable residents before an event occurs.

LIVABLE NEIGHBORHOODS

Relevant objectives:

Housing Affordability (BE-4) – 4.4 out of 15 points.

Infill & Redevelopment (BE-5) – 4.9 out of 10 points.

Arts & Culture (EAC-1) – 6.5 out of 15 points.

Historic Preservation (EAC-4) – 6.4 out of 10 points.

Recommendations:

Strategic Plan Strategy 1.2: Create infill development design standards

AND

Strategic Plan Strategy 1.3: Create guidelines and incentives for disposition of vacant lots.

- STAR measure BE-5, Action 4 – Use regulatory and design strategies to encourage compatible infill and redevelopment with a mix of housing types in neighborhoods close to employment centers, commercial areas, and where transit or transportation alternatives exist.
- STAR measure BE-5, Action – Perform proactive zoning enforcement and vacant lot cleanup or maintenance to improve the attractiveness of a redevelopment or blighted area and to deter crime.

Strategic Plan Objective 2: Expand housing assistance programs.

- STAR measure BE-4, Action 1 – Develop a comprehensive housing strategy.

Strategic Plan Strategy 3.1: Support public art/community appearance.

- STAR measure EAC-1, Action 2 – Adopt a percent-for-art ordinance requiring a percentage of the cost of new major development projects, public works projects, or capital improvement projects go to public art.
- STAR measure EAC-1, Action 8 – Require classes that advance arts education within the core curriculum in all public elementary and middle schools (k-8) AND provide special annual programming that brings artists into schools or brings students to art venues.

Strategic Plan Objective 4: Preserve historic resources

- STAR measure EAC-4, Outcome 2 – Increase over time the annual number of eligible structures, sites, and landscapes designated as local historic landmarks, added to local historic districts, and/or rehabilitated restored, or converted through adaptive reuse.
- STAR measure EAC-4, Action 8 – Provide incentives to encourage the rehabilitation and preservation of historic buildings, and reinvestment in older and historic neighborhoods and commercial areas.

HEALTHY ENVIRONMENT

Relevant objectives:

Compact & Complete Communities (BE-4) – 6.7 out of 20 points.

Waste Minimization (CE-7) – 6.5 out of 15 points.

Water in the Environment (NS-5) – 6.2 out of 20 points.

Recommendations:

Strategic Plan Strategy 1.1: Design guidelines for mixed-use development.

- STAR measure BE-3, Action 2 – Adopt a specific mobility or circulation plan for compact, mixed development.
- STAR measure BE-3, Action 4 – Adopt regulatory strategies that permit or incentivize increased residential and employment densities and diverse uses in transit-served areas and areas identified for compact, mixed-use development.

Strategic Plan Action Item 3.2.1: Provide additional study of parking requirements for transit development.

- STAR measure BE-3, Action 6 – Adopt advanced parking strategies in transit-served areas and areas identified for compact, mixed-use development.

Strategic Plan Strategy 3.3: Provide additional recycling education programming
AND

Strategic Plan Objective 5: Develop comprehensive solid waste management strategies.

- STAR measure CE-7, Action 3 – Create a public education campaign or a focused outreach effort to inform residents and businesses of their roles in achieving waste reduction targets.
- STAR measure CE-7, Action 5 – Implement communitywide incentives or enforce regulations ensuring that residents and businesses are working toward community waste reductions targets.

Strategic Plan Objective 4: Manage water quality and quantity.

- STAR measure NS-5, Action 1 – Conduct a Watershed Health and Vulnerability Assessment of local waterways.
- STAR measure NS-5, Action 2 – Adopt a watershed management plan that integrates natural water bodies with human water use and addresses inputs and outputs of the water systems.