

**CITY OF LITTLE ROCK, ARKANSAS**

**2025**

**SUSTAINABILITY ACTION PLAN**









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# FROM MAYOR FRANK SCOTT, JR.



The City of Little Rock is committed to building a sustainable and resilient present and future. To truly unite, grow and transform Arkansas's capital city, we must be good stewards of our environment as we build a more sustainable Little Rock.

In the pages to follow, our first Sustainability Action Plan (SAP) offers a policy vision that merges traditional environmental protection measures like recycling and waste reduction with 21st century sustainability initiatives like electric vehicles and clean energy. This plan puts Little Rock in a strong position to withstand climate adversity toward a sustainable and equitable future.

Since I took office in January 2019, Little Rock has felt the impact of our changing climate. From the historic floods of 2019, the record-breaking snowfall in the winter of 2021, or the high-end EF-3 tornado that fed off a warm and unstable atmosphere, we have remained resilient. This plan doubles down on our collective strengths, pairing resident resilience with evidence-based sustainability actions.

This sustainability action plan outlines the strategies that Little Rock can pursue to create a more sustainable City. Many of these strategies focus on action that the City of Little Rock as an organization can implement. By leading on sustainability, the City can forge the way for other organizations and entities to join us on this sustainability journey.

As we look to implement the strategies outlined herein, I must share my sincere appreciation and gratitude for our Sustainability Commission and City staff that have compiled data and information for this plan.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in green ink, reading "Frank Scott, Jr." with a stylized flourish at the end.



# FROM THE **LITTLE ROCK** **SUSTAINABILITY COMMISSION**

The Little Rock Sustainability Commission is proud to offer the following 2025 Sustainability Action Plan (SAP). A culmination of years of planning and the work of countless commissioners, City staff members, liaisons from the Board of Directors and the Mayor's Office, volunteers, and other stakeholders, this plan was created to provide a roadmap to address the environmental impacts of the City of Little Rock's operations. We hope that the strategies and objectives outlined below will serve as a guide for City leaders as they confront the effects of climate change, biodiversity loss, natural resource constraints, and the other environmental crises of our day.

The Little Rock Sustainability Commission is an advisory body composed of volunteers appointed by the Mayor and confirmed by the City Board of Directors to provide policy advice on issues of environmental sustainability facing the City. The Commission was established as a Mayoral Task Force in 2008 and codified as a full City Commission in 2018. Commissioners come from all over the city and from a variety of backgrounds, including sustainability professionals, engineers, business leaders, students, educators, and activists.

The 2025 SAP was born out of the advocacy of successive generations of Sustainability Commissioners and Sustainability Office staff pushing for the creation of a set of goals and plans against which the City's progress on environmental issues could be measured. In the development of the 2025 SAP, we referenced previous Sustainability Commission-developed action plans from both 2015 and 2020 to develop the framework for the plan below. We are grateful for the work of dozens of commissioners and volunteers lending their time and expertise over the last decade to ensure that the City of Little Rock meets the environmental challenges of our day head on.

We intend this 2025 SAP to be a living document, updated based on emerging challenges, changing needs, progress toward goals, and resident input. We invite all City leaders and staff, community members, and other stakeholders to help us to continue to refine this document as we work to guide the City's work. You can find more information on how best to engage with the Little Rock Sustainability Commission on the City's website.

Sincerely,  
Little Rock Sustainability Commission



# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Sustainability means a lot of different things to a lot of different people. As a City with many constituencies, it can be challenging to successfully address all aspects of sustainability.

## DUTY TO FUTURE GENERATIONS

This report is a decade in the making. The Sustainability Commission was formally created as a City Commission in 2018. Shortly thereafter, the newly-formed commission created a Roadmap to 2020, and later a Roadmap to 2025. Both of these roadmaps included policy and programmatic recommendations for

City Staff to implement. In his 2022 State of the City Address, Mayor Scott charged the Sustainability Office and Commission with creating this Sustainability Action Plan, which serves as a more complete set of policy recommendations to inform City action on sustainability.

This report is the product of many research projects that have catalogued different aspects of sustainability at different times, including:

- “Developing Little Rock’s Sustainability Action Plan” by Rachel Furman (2024)
- ICLEI Technical Assistance and LRSO Frameworks (2023)
- Clinton School of Public Service Practicum Project (2022)
- Road to 2025 Document (2020)



Little Rock's SAP features five sections, each of which details strategy areas where the City can make progress to secure a greener and cleaner future. Each section contains an introduction, which is followed by high-level policy objectives. Each objective is accompanied by strategies to achieve the stated goal.

The report will serve as a guide to City Staff and the Sustainability Commission as well as an aid in determining sustainability priorities for City policymakers. As our first iteration of a complete sustainability action plan, this report positions Little Rock to take action, muster resources, and be prepared to proactively access opportunities.





# ENERGY

Energy efficiency is the cornerstone of Little Rock's sustainability efforts. It's about making sure that the City's buildings, facilities, and operations are powered with clean energy and run as efficiently as possible. This includes looking for clean energy and electricity sources to power our buildings, exploring options for electrification where it makes sense,

taking care of our large equipment like HVAC systems, and pursuing upgrades to reduce electricity usage across city operations. When the City does this work, we expect a dual benefit: energy efficiency improvements should save us money in the long term while improving facilities in the short term.

## ENERGY OBJECTIVE 1

100% clean energy for City operations by 2030.

**STRATEGY 1A:** Complete the existing 4.9 MW solar installation project.

**STRATEGY 1B:** Join the SolSmart program and pursue designation of a SolSmart Community.

**STRATEGY 1C:** Maximize solar use at suitable city-owned locations.





# ENERGY OBJECTIVE 2

Improve energy efficiency in City operations.

**STRATEGY 2A:** Assess and adopt internal policies to conserve energy.

**STRATEGY 2B:** Hire an Energy Manager position reporting to the OEA to focus on energy data collection and analysis across city operations and departments.

**STRATEGY 2C:** Convert city streetlights and all remaining buildings to LED lighting.

**STRATEGY 2D:** Designate an Energy Savings Fund that allows savings from energy projects to fund additional improvements.

**STRATEGY 2E:** Align procurement practices to include life cycle analysis for energy costs and energy-efficiency for equipment procurement, operations, and facility management.

**STRATEGY 2F:** Design all new city buildings and facilities to be LEED Certified, Net Zero, or maximal energy efficiency. Enforce the Conservation of Energy in City-Owned Buildings and Properties as outlined in Resolution #11,978.

**STRATEGY 2G:** Consider updating building code standards to improve energy efficiency of new buildings.

**STRATEGY 2H:** Consider opportunities for energy savings performance contracting to facilitate capital-intensive improvements for City-owned buildings.





# TRANSPORTATION

As a regional hub, Little Rock depends heavily on transportation for economic vitality and connectivity. However, it also faces challenges related to vehicle emissions and energy consumption, which impact air quality, public health, and environmental resilience. This focus area prioritizes shifts toward cleaner fuel sources, alternative transportation options,

and energy-efficient fleet management practices. By reducing reliance on fossil fuels, promoting public and active transportation, and implementing smart technology solutions, Little Rock strives to set a standard in sustainable mobility and create a more resilient, dynamic, and healthy community.



**52%** of Little Rock residents would like to see improved public transportation.

*(2022 Clinton School of Public Service Survey)*







# TRANSPORTATION OBJECTIVE 1

Utilize existing master plans to enhance and expand alternative transportation.

**STRATEGY 1A:** Expand alternative transportation routes and accessibility, including bicycle, walking, and public transportation options.

**STRATEGY 1B:** Implement the Master Transportation Plan.

# TRANSPORTATION OBJECTIVE 2

Reduce greenhouse gas emissions from transportation in City Operations.

**STRATEGY 2A:** Transition 50% of the city's fleet to electric vehicles by 2030.

**STRATEGY 2B:** Analyze fleet mileage and routes for efficiency.

**STRATEGY 2C:** Expand public EV infrastructure.



# WASTE

Efficient waste management is a critical pillar of sustainability for the City of Little Rock's operations. As the city grows, so does the volume of waste generated by municipal services, facilities, and activities. To minimize environmental impact and contribute to a circular economy, Little Rock is committed to reducing waste, increasing recycling rates, and improving

waste diversion practices. This focus area outlines strategies and actions to enhance waste management processes, reduce landfill dependency, and align city operations with broader sustainability goals. Through these efforts, Little Rock aims to lead by example in fostering a cleaner, more sustainable community.



**63%** of Little Rock residents would like to see improved recycling and waste management services

*(2022 Clinton School of Public Service Survey)*







# WASTE OBJECTIVE 1

Reduce waste and increase recycling in City Operations and City-wide.

- STRATEGY 1A:** Assess and adopt internal policies to reduce single-use plastics. Educate vendors and Procurement to enforce the No-Styrofoam Policy as outlined in Resolution #14,896.
- STRATEGY 1B:** Assess and improve internal recycling processes and evaluate waste reduction opportunities by department.
- STRATEGY 1C:** Consider reevaluating or amending the existing multi-family residence recycling ordinance.
- STRATEGY 1D:** Expand recycling drop-off access and provide education to residents on all other recycling opportunities.
- STRATEGY 1E:** Evaluate opportunities to expand or create new composting initiatives and support composting in community gardens.
- STRATEGY 1F:** Consider and pursue grant opportunities for establishing a Materials Innovation Center to store, restore, and reuse salvageable housing construction materials or other materials.
- STRATEGY 1G:** Encourage the reduction of single-use plastics with the Green Restaurant Certification program and other business-oriented educational programs.





## WASTE OBJECTIVE 2

Decrease litter occurrence in the City.

**STRATEGY 2A:** Operate a litter prevention campaign for public awareness.

**STRATEGY 2B:** Assess the city to identify common litter dumping locations, including public and private spaces.

**STRATEGY 2C:** Establish strategies to reduce litter in highest priority areas.

## WASTE OBJECTIVE 3

Reduce environmental impact of the City-owned Landfill.

**STRATEGY 3A:** Implement landfill methane capture to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and explore selling renewable natural gas credits.

**STRATEGY 3B:** Explore feasibility of landfill alternatives such as waste-to-energy or digesters.

**STRATEGY 3C:** Consider providing alternatives to or reducing the use of plastic bags for leaves and yard waste collection.

**STRATEGY 3D:** Assess and analyze current landfill waste streams and contributors to find opportunities for reduction in annual tonnage to extend the lifetime of the landfill.



# NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

The Natural Environment section focuses on preserving and enhancing the city's natural resources to promote ecological health, resilience, and sustainability. Little Rock's parks, urban forests, rivers, and open spaces are integral to both environmental stability and community well-being. Through proactive management of green spaces, water resources, and biodiversity,

city operations can foster a healthier ecosystem that supports cleaner air, water quality, and climate resilience. This plan prioritizes sustainable practices that protect wildlife habitats, reduce pollution, and adapt to environmental changes, ensuring a vibrant and thriving natural environment for generations to come.



## 64%

**of Little Rock residents  
want the City of Little  
Rock to prioritize Green  
Infrastructure**

*(2022 Clinton School of Public Service Survey)*







# 60%

of Little Rock residents  
want the City of Little  
Rock to prioritize green  
spaces

*(2022 Clinton School of Public Service Survey)*



## NATURAL ENVIRONMENT OBJECTIVE 1

Preserve and restore natural habitats within the City.

- STRATEGY 1A:** Reassess community wide access to green spaces and urban tree canopy coverage. Prioritize lowest scoring neighborhoods for tree planting and green space creation or restoration.
- STRATEGY 1B:** Determine the health of the waterways within the city and expand or create riparian buffer zones with native species.
- STRATEGY 1C:** Assess air quality using available data and establish air quality baseline.
- STRATEGY 1D:** Create a conservation plan to assess and maintain undeveloped habitat within and adjacent to the city, including assessing ecological and biodiversity impacts, wetland status, and green connection/corridor importance or potential.



# NATURAL ENVIRONMENT OBJECTIVE 2

Promote sustainable land use and management.

- STRATEGY 2A:** Implement the new Stormwater Management and Drainage Manual and incentivize low-impact development design and installation on private development.
- STRATEGY 2B:** Establish invasive species management plan for all public landscapes managed by the city and adopt a native-only policy for public landscapes, including those maintained by Public Works or Parks and Recreation.
- STRATEGY 2C:** Establish guidance for siting and maintenance of native landscaping in public spaces to beautify the city, reduce erosion, reduce emissions, increase biodiversity, and provide flood control.
- STRATEGY 2D:** Create a public awareness campaign for biodiversity and habitat loss, including education on No-Mow Zones.
- STRATEGY 2E:** Create award program with collaboration from groups like the Sustainability Commission and City Beautiful Commission to recognize residents and businesses that adhere to native plant and sustainable landscaping practices and design.
- STRATEGY 2F:** Incentivize and encourage increased mixed use and density in planning and development.





# EDUCATION & AWARENESS

Education & Awareness is about equipping city employees, stakeholders, and the broader community with the knowledge and skills necessary to support sustainable practices. This section emphasizes the importance of raising awareness about environmental issues such as energy efficiency, waste reduction, and resource conservation. It outlines initiatives to provide training, programs, and communication strategies aimed at fostering a sustainability-minded culture

within city operations. By increasing understanding of sustainability goals and practices, City employees are empowered to take meaningful action and collaborate on efforts to reduce Little Rock's environmental footprint. Ultimately, the focus on education and awareness seeks to inspire behavior change, ensuring that sustainable practices are seamlessly integrated into the city's daily operations and long-term planning for a greener future.



# EDUCATION & AWARENESS OBJECTIVE 1

Foster environmental awareness, education, and engagement within the City.

- STRATEGY 1A:** Develop and implement training programs or workshops to educate city staff on sustainability practices and behavioral changes.
- STRATEGY 1B:** Identify potential partners, including local schools, universities, and environmental organizations, to collaborate on capacity building, expand resources, and develop educational opportunities.
- STRATEGY 1C:** Provide professional development sessions and training workshops for teachers to integrate sustainability into their curricula.
- STRATEGY 1D:** Plan and organize community events, such as eco-fairs, workshops, and environmental awareness campaigns, to engage residents in sustainable practices and awareness-building.
- STRATEGY 1E:** Collaborate with community members, neighborhood associations, local influencers, environmental advocates, and educational institutions to amplify the reach and impact of awareness campaigns on sustainability topics.
- STRATEGY 1F:** Explore interactive tools or apps that encourage community participation in environmental initiatives, fostering a sense of ownership and involvement in sustainability efforts.
- STRATEGY 1G:** Develop and share resource guides for schools, businesses, and events (including conferences and conventions with Little Rock Convention and Visitors Bureau) to practice low-waste and other environmental initiatives.





# CONCLUSION

As Little Rock's first Sustainability Action Plan, this document marks an important milestone for our city. It is a starting point—a living framework that we expect to grow and evolve as new sustainability solutions emerge, challenges shift, and City resources expand. This plan is intended as a dynamic tool to guide action, inform decision-making, and spark collaboration.

Community involvement is key to building a sustainable Little Rock. The public is always welcome to attend the City's Sustainability Commission meetings. As of this publication, they are held on the fourth Wednesday of each month from 3:00 to 4:30 p.m. Meetings are open to all and offer an opportunity to stay informed, share feedback, and help shape the future of our city.

To learn more or get involved, visit: [www.LittleRock.gov/Sustainability](http://www.LittleRock.gov/Sustainability)



# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This report is the product of the time and service of many staff members, residents, and sustainability professionals.

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Department of Public Works, Solid Waste

Department of Fleet Services

Department of Planning and  
Development

Department of Parks and Recreation

Department of Executive Administration,  
Mayor's Office

Department of Executive Administration,  
City Manager's Office

Clinton School Practicum Team 2021-22



The City of Little Rock Board of Directors  
unanimously approved the adoption  
of the 2025 SAP on September 2, 2025.







**THANK  
YOU!**



