



Resource Guide

for Chapter Sustainability
and Resiliency Committees

APWA Sustainability and
Resiliency Committee 2026

Resource Guide

for Chapter Sustainability and Resiliency Committees



So . . . You Have a Chapter Sustainability and Resiliency Committee (Or Want to Start One)! Now What?

Sustainability and resiliency in public works means seeking a balanced approach to establish and maintain a vibrant community today and tomorrow, which is accomplished by the efficient delivery of effective and resilient infrastructure in an environmentally responsible way that ensures the best economic choice in the long term.

The APWA Sustainability and Resiliency Committee brings together the latest tools, resources, education, and knowledge public works professionals need to achieve sustainable and resilient communities.

To support APWA members in promoting a holistic approach to public infrastructure, the Sustainability and Resiliency Committee is encouraging chapters to establish local sustainability and resiliency committees comprised of members who know the local players, issues, and topics of interest.

This Resource Guide for Chapter Sustainability and Resiliency Committees is designed to provide your chapter with information, ideas, resources, and contacts as you create, build, and grow your sustainability and resiliency committee. Whether you are a chapter leader or member, have already established a sustainability and resiliency committee, don't know where to start, want to share your success, and/or learn from others, you'll find this Resource Guide helpful.



SUSTAINABILITY

START



For more information about the APWA Sustainability and Resiliency Committee scan the QR code.



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An Introduction to Chapter Committees

Chapter committees are created and charged with meeting the chapter's strategic objectives. Chapter committees are normally appointed by the chapter president to perform specific functions, study current issues, or serve special interests of members. In most cases, committees communicate information and assist chapter leaders in decision-making. But chapters have the opportunity to structure their committees in the way that best meets the specific needs of the chapter, its members, and the association.

Functions of a Chapter Sustainability and Resiliency Committee

Many chapters have elected to form sustainability and resiliency committees, which can directly influence the chapter's direction. Generally, chapter sustainability and resiliency committees may perform and report some of the following tasks:

- Provide relevant educational opportunities through chapter meetings, conference sessions, and the chapter newsletter.
- Promote the Institute for Sustainable Infrastructure (ISI) Envision Rating System through member training and education sessions.
- Recognize sustainability and resiliency leaders, projects, and initiatives through chapter awards.
- Advocate for the advancement of sustainability and resiliency goals in their community.
- Monitor and identify emerging trends in sustainability and resiliency that impact public works within your

local area.

Whether delivering educational content or growing membership, your committee's influence can help improve your community's sustainability and resiliency.

Committee Appointments

Committee work serves as an excellent training ground for future chapter leaders. The opportunity for an individual to participate in committee work, and the challenge it provides, enhances feelings of belonging, playing a significant role in the chapter, and loyalty to the association.

Role of the Committee Chair

Responsibilities of committee chairpersons are defined in relation to a specific committee. The chairperson's role will normally change as the committee's work develops. There are general responsibilities, however,

common to all committee chairpersons:

- Committee organization and structure
- Scheduling meetings
- Preparing and/or approving the agenda
- Presiding at meetings
- Making committee and individual work assignments
- Reviewing and approving of minutes

Committee Members

Typically, the chapter president works with committee chairpersons to appoint committee members.

When choosing committee members, chapters should balance the selection of successful, experienced members with those new to the chapter. Newer members will provide a fresh outside perspective, while experienced members provide guidance and history. It is always to the committee chairperson's benefit to appoint members who are knowledgeable and interested in the committee's area of activity. The chairperson should provide members with background information that will help the committee function more effectively, including specific responsibilities of the committee and its past performance.

Committees are encouraged to actively engage with members, other committees, and nonmembers to promote committee activities and to build committee and chapter membership.



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Goal Setting and Objectives

Each committee, whether newly formed or already established, should annually identify what is to be accomplished and set goals and objectives for the coming year. This annual review should include a systematic assessment of existing programs and an examination of how your chapter does or does not meet the needs of chapter members. Surveys can be used to assess your members' likes and dislikes, what programs and services they would like to see in your chapter, and how the chapter can best meet their training and educational needs.

Sustainability and Resiliency Mentoring

The APWA Sustainability and Resiliency Committee can match you with other APWA members who have previously been involved as active committee members or chairs. A mentor can often provide valuable insight and suggestions on how to successfully grow and maintain your committee, along with moral support for times when committee growth may be slow, or you are seeking additional support from your chapter. Please contact SRC@apwa.org if you're interested in being paired with a mentor.

Suggested Activities

Chapter Sustainability and Resiliency Committees typically engage their members and provide relevant educational opportunities through the following:

- Monthly chapter meetings—outside of your committee—are great opportunities to raise sustainability and resiliency awareness and attract new committee members.
- The APWA Sustainability and Resiliency Committee also highlights sustainable practices in APWA's resource center. These can be shared with the local chapter or highlighted in local chapter newsletters.



Some APWA committees, like Transportation or Water Resources Management, may have sustainability and resiliency information included with their monthly Focus On series, which includes email and a webpage.

- Sharing articles from the APWA Reporter on relevant topics with committee members.
- Encouraging a member to join the APWA Sustainability and Resiliency Knowledge Team
- Sharing presentations that have been gathered by the APWA Sustainability and Resiliency Committee with chapter committees.
- The APWA Sustainability and Resiliency Committee has created toolboxes, articles, and other documents available to chapter committees for use with training and education sessions. Chapters and chapter committee members are encouraged to connect with the APWA Sustainability and Resiliency Committee for news, networking, and guidance.
- [The Sustainability and Resiliency Learning Library](#), which can be highlighted in chapter or committee meetings and newsletters.

Promote Envision through member training and education sessions:

- Several canned presentations on the Envision Rating System can be downloaded from the [Institute for Sustainable Infrastructure \(ISI\) website](#) and used in presentations and educational settings.

Advancement of sustainability and resiliency goals in your community:

Be a champion for the advancement of sustainability and resiliency goals in your community. As a committee, regularly reach out to other APWA members to discuss sustainability and resiliency efforts being considered or achieved in other chapters. Offer to conduct presentations, provide or sponsor luncheon guests, and to have joint meetings with other chapter committees. Some committees reach out to public officials, volunteer time for charity events, or participate in fairs and conferences. Every opportunity to get in front of a group is an opportunity to share and expand sustainable and resilient practices.

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Interfacing with the APWA Sustainability and Resiliency Committee

In order to drive transformation in the management of public works, the APWA Center for Sustainability (C4S) was created in 2008 to help public works professionals confront the challenges facing their community.

In establishing the APWA Center for Sustainability (C4S), the APWA Board of Directors recognized that shrinking local budgets, rising material costs, more engaged and better-informed stakeholders, and new regulatory mandates are making the daily work of public works professionals more challenging. These challenges require a new and better approach to public works management that focuses on innovative, collaborative, and whole systems thinking.

In 2024, C4S was renamed as the APWA Sustainability and Resiliency Committee to include additional duties related to the long-term resiliency of infrastructure and communities. The committee

is an integrated strategy committee rather than a technical committee, collaborating to align, develop, and implement unified strategies across applicable technical disciplines of public works.

APWA Sustainability and Resiliency Committee members identify and develop tools and best practices to ensure APWA becomes the driving force for sustainability and resiliency in public works management while growing the next generation of public works leaders with strong sustainability and resiliency credentials and commitment. Three long-term priorities guide the committee's work:

- Establish and promote a framework for sustainability and resiliency to assist APWA committees and chapters in taking a holistic, systems-based approach to their projects.
- Provide professional development training and education opportunities for APWA members and nonmembers related to sustainability and resiliency in public works.

- Identify strategic partners at the federal, state, and local levels to leverage resources and promote change.

Mission

The mission of the APWA Sustainability and Resiliency Committee is to support APWA's strategic goals of providing excellence in education within the areas of sustainability and resiliency within the context of public works.

Interfacing with Other Chapters

The following are ideas for peer sharing. The APWA Sustainability and Resiliency Committee will foster relationships and sharing between chapters through:

- Development of quarterly updates for chapter sustainability and resiliency committees.
- Facilitating the sharing of best practices, technical session topics, and suggested presenter contact information across chapters.
- Facilitating chapter partnerships with other organizations.



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Interfacing with Other Chapter Committees

Awards Committee

Chapter awards committees propose and document nominations for both chapter and national awards. This is a great tool to recognize your chapter members for their outstanding contributions to the chapter and the profession of public works. Developing nominations and planning the chapter's awards ceremony is a good project for the awards committee. If your chapter does not already recognize members for their sustainability-related contributions, consider working with the awards committee to incorporate this into your program.

To create an award, the committee can develop categories, set criteria, and solicit submissions from members. In setting your criteria, consider that the project size or impact may not be the most important success factors. Even a project that costs or saves very little, or that only impacts a small area, may be something replicable that can have long-term benefits. Your chapter may already provide performance or service awards into which sustainability and resiliency awards can be integrated. Here's a quick list of criteria that might help initiate a new award program.

Award criteria and nominees should:

- Demonstrate good sustainability, resiliency, and environmental practice
- Have been implemented within the last 12 months
- Provide a good example for others to follow

- Incorporate savings or improve cost-benefit ratios
- Be clear and comprehensive
- Be more than what is required by duty, regulation, or planning conditions

Additionally, you can incorporate sustainability and resiliency criteria into existing awards.

Education and Training Committee

Activities of this committee include assessment of chapter members' educational and training needs, sole or joint sponsorship of education programs within the chapter, sponsorship of association education programs, and maintenance of good relationships with area educational facilities.

Education and Training Committees conduct market surveys of member needs and choose subjects for technical sessions, considering coverage of the functional areas of public works.

Chapter programs may range from a luncheon meeting with a speaker to a multi-day conference with an exposition. Some chapters meet annually; others meet monthly. All must hold at least one membership meeting each year. APWA Sustainability and Resiliency Committee Members can present at your chapter conference.

Newsletter Committee

Chapter newsletters provide yet another means of exchanging information. They are especially valuable to maintain contact with members in chapters that meet infrequently or encompass a large geographical area.

Newsletters may include reports on chapter committees, information on chapter activities, surveys and questionnaires, excerpts from professional journals or newsletters, new publications available, book reviews, and educational opportunities (workshops, programs, teleconferences, etc.).

This is the perfect opportunity to share APWA Sustainability and Resiliency Committee resources with your chapter.

Young Professionals

Chapters are encouraged to reach out and engage younger APWA members (generally accepted to be public works professionals who are age 35 or under, and/or with less than five years of experience in the public works profession). If your chapter has a Young Professionals Committee or network, you may find members interested in sustainability joining your committee or working together.

APWA's Young Professionals Network is an active, engaged group of younger public works professionals who get together monthly via conference calls and exchange ideas and best practices in order to attract younger members to APWA and their chapters. The members of the Young Professionals Network are responsible for bringing back to the chapter what they learn from the conference call meetings and from the minutes distributed back to their chapter leadership. There is an APWA Young Professional Committee webpage for more information.

Interfacing with Other Chapter Committees

Contact information for Chapter Sustainability and Resiliency Committee Leaders can be requested by emailing SRC@apwa.org.

Appendix A

*Launching a Sustainability Committee: The APWA North Carolina Experience
From the May 2012 Issue of the Reporter*

Launching a Sustainability Committee: the APWA North Carolina Chapter experience

Scott Whalen, P.E., Vice President, WK Dickson & Co., Inc., Raleigh, North Carolina, and member, APWA Center for Sustainability; **Judy Weseman**, P.E., Senior Project Manager, WK Dickson & Co., Inc., Raleigh, North Carolina

Public works professionals have a long history of recognizing important changes in public works administration and leadership and making appropriate adjustments to their departments. Most recently, the emphasis on sustainability and implementation of sustainable concepts has opened up, for many public works managers, very different perspectives and expectations within their departments. Recognizing this paradigm shift in priorities as well as maintaining a continued commitment to help APWA develop and support its members, the North Carolina Chapter of APWA (APWA-NC) formed a Sustainability Committee in 2011.

Across the U.S., only a handful of APWA chapters and branches have Sustainability Committees, although the number continues to grow due to the increased interest in sustainable practices in public works. Evidence of the expanding importance of sustainability is shown by the growing number of topic-relevant presentations and sustainability-oriented vendors at conferences such as APWA's International Public Works Congress & Exposition, growing attendance at APWA's annual Sustainability in Public Works Conference, the formation of the Center for Sustainability, support as an equal partner with the Institute

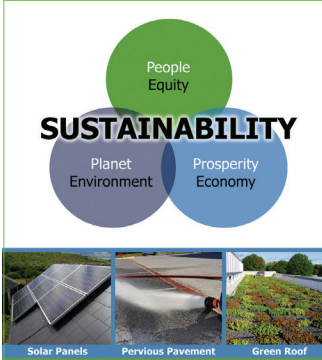
for Sustainable Infrastructure (ISI), and the availability of increased funding for sustainability projects for public works. In fact the 2011 Sustainability in Public Works Conference had over 300 attendees, clearly demonstrating that interest continues to grow.

How did the APWA-NC first organize its Sustainability Committee and what have been the keys to its early success? We would like to share our "lessons learned" with other chapters and branches as you consider how to add your own Sustainability Committee.

Getting Started - Committee Member Selection

Using APWA-NC's statewide listserve, an open call was issued for interested Sustainability Committee members. The organizing group was quickly overwhelmed with an enormous response for a committee envisioned to have no more than a handful of members. All interested members were provided a two-page digital form in which they were asked to give their public works background; type of employer (e.g., local government, consultant, state government, vendor); APWA Technical Division interest; sustainability training and certifications such as LEED; and, most importantly, the reason they wished to serve on the committee. Responses were sorted with priority given to ensuring representation of all Technical Divisions and a

balanced cross-section of employer types. Care was taken to also include both small and large public works organization representation as perspectives of both would be valuable. In addition, two




SUSTAINABILITY


People Equity
Planet Environment
Prosperity Economy

Solar Panels Pervious Pavement Green Roof

"Sustainability is more than preserving natural resources...it touches all aspects of public works."



LED Lighting Rainwater Harvesting Electric Vehicles



AMERICAN PUBLIC WORKS ASSOCIATION
APWA NC
North Carolina Chapter

Information available online at:
apwa.net/centerforsustainability &
sustainableinfrastructure.org

Appendix A continued

engineering graduate students were recruited to the committee in an effort to both give the students valued exposure to a network of public works professionals and to spread the word among the collegiate environment about the desirability of a career in public works. This highly competitive screening process resulted in the selection of fifteen highly motivated committee members. In the first year the committee has been quite active with only one committee member resigning due to a job change outside public works.

Maximizing Committee Member Participation

Committee meetings are held by teleconference monthly with opportunities to network face-to-face at chapter or division conferences. Attendance is high, 80% participation or more, at all teleconferences, a significantly higher participation rate than was expected with live meetings. In addition to ease of participation, the teleconferences are both more time and energy efficient. With the current high cost of fuel coupled with our focused mission of sustainability, the teleconference meeting was an easy choice for our group.

Keeping the committee members engaged has been achieved several ways. First, since the committee has only one or two representatives from each Technical Division, all members are charged with reporting back to their assigned Technical Divisions. In addition, they are responsible for securing space at their meetings and conferences for the committee, whether it is speaking, with a display table, or on a panel discussion. With the wide range of skills and communities represented, each committee member's unique skills

Sustainability Ranking in Member Organizations

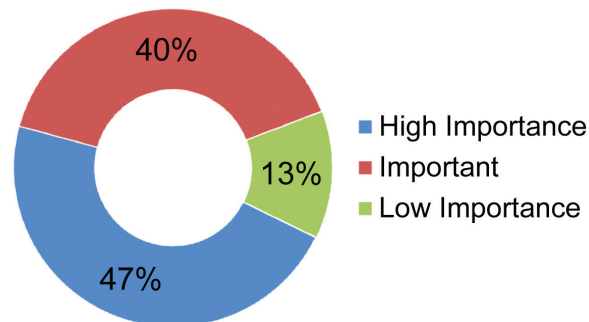


Figure 2

are tapped to the fullest. Thus far, committee members have written journal articles, developed a database of sustainability practices among members, participated with website development, presented technical sessions and more.

Committee Goal Setting

First and foremost, the APWA-NC Sustainability Committee's commitment was to serve the needs of the general chapter membership as it relates to integrating sustainability in public works. To best determine how to reach the most members and to focus on the most important topics, a short online survey was provided through the APWA-NC Chapter listserv to all members to learn the topics of greatest interest and benefit, preferred method of receiving sustainability information from the committee, the perceived rank of sustainability in their organization as well as the status of any sustainability initiatives in their communities, and other shared topics of interest.

Results from this survey served to both inform and prioritize the committee work. As is shown in Figure 2, 47% of all respondents ranked sustainability of high importance in their organization. Figure 3 details prioritized sustainability topics as ranked by our members and indicates greatest interest in life-cycle cost analysis followed by a tie with energy management and recycling/solid waste reduction. Figure 4 shows that preferred delivery methods for sustainability topics was fairly evenly divided between case studies, webinars, presentations at State Chapter and Technical Division Conferences, and presentations at regionally convenient sites.

Serving APWA-NC Membership

Shortly after formation, the NC Sustainability Committee moved to establish a presence at all technical session meetings with various approaches including tabletop displays, participation in panel discussions, and presentations. Within six months, the committee



Appendix A continued

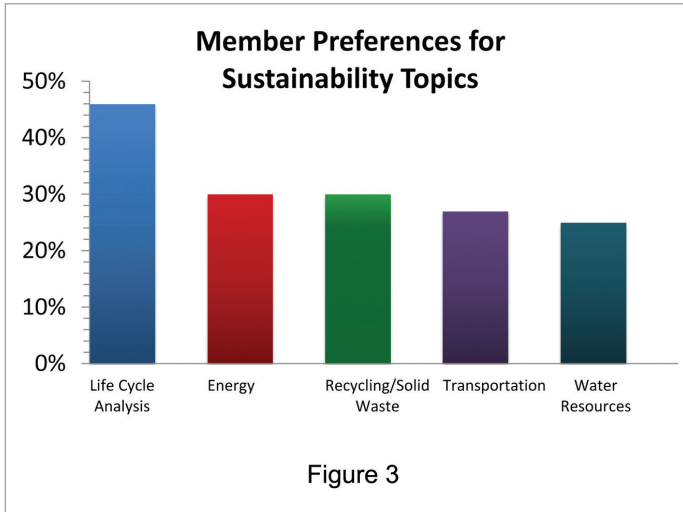


Figure 3

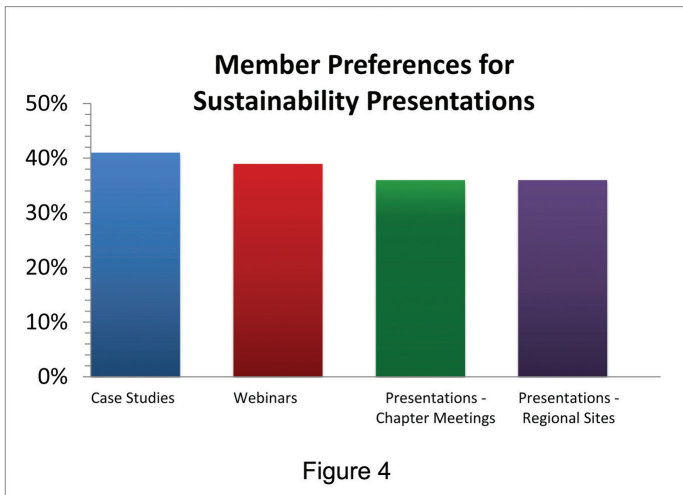


Figure 4

had established a click-through page on the chapter website with a wide range of information and references for member use. State Chapter members will soon have the benefit of a web-based database that documents other APWA-NC members with knowledge and experience in a variety of sustainability practice areas that can be contacted as resources by those

desiring to grow or improve their sustainability programs in their communities.

Connecting with Chapter Technical Divisions

Structuring the Sustainability Committee membership to achieve representation with each Technical Division has proven important in ensuring connection with all

Chapter Technical Divisions. Committee members are all assigned to at least one Technical Division and, in most cases, serve as a backup to another division. Efforts are made to make sure at least one committee member is able to attend the various Technical Division meetings and conferences. In addition, the assigned committee members work directly with the Technical Division Presidents to ensure sustainability resources are available at all meetings and speakers are available when needed.

Future Plans

Much has been accomplished in the first nine months of the APWA-NC Sustainability Committee. We have moved to quickly learn how the committee can serve chapter member needs by determining sustainability issues of high priority to our membership. From our state membership feedback, we have implemented their preferences for methods to present sustainability topics. In support of APWA-NC efforts to achieve the PACE Award, the chapter has proactively assembled a package of documents for state chapter use in seeking the award. And we continue to seek other ways of communicating with and connecting to our state chapter membership using the chapter website and posting new information such as member sustainability practices on the website. Most important, the Sustainability Committee leadership has and will continue to focus on keeping each committee member involved and engaged in serving the overall membership and fulfilling the mission of APWA of developing and supporting those involved in public works as they integrate sustainability into the daily practice of public works.

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Appendix A continued

The authors acknowledge the contributions of the APWA-NC Sustainability Committee to these articles. Those members include: Scott Whalen, P.E., WK Dickson, Chair; Jim Beck, P.E., DRMP, Vice-Chair; Russell Byrd, City of Winston-Salem; Danny Bowden, City of Raleigh; Thomas Cordell, self-employed; C.J. O'Neill, Town of Matthews; Giselle Rodriguez, P.E., City of Fayetteville; Butch Simmons, City of Greensboro; Judy Weseman, P.E., WK Dickson; David Wolfe, City of Charlotte; Jeff Young, City of Concord; Scott Godefroy, City of Greenville; Bob Holden, Town of Cary; Natalie Bouchard, graduate student, NC State University; Brad Wardynski, graduate student, NC State University; and Jo Anne Wiles, WK Dickson, ex-officio member.

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Call Amanda or Kristen at (800) 800-0341.



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Appendix B

Chapter Award Criteria Examples

The following examples are provided as starting points to creating an award, categories, and criteria. This incomplete list is for cities, states, and various agencies. A quick internet search can offer many, many more for your awards subcommittee.

APWA Minnesota Chapter Awards: For more than 30 years, the APWA-MN Chapter has sponsored an annual awards program that recognizes excellence in public works. In addition, the chapter actively supports the APWA awards program with multiple submissions annually.

APWA Oregon Chapter, Sustainability Practices Award: This award recognizes individuals, programs, agencies, and organizations that have made outstanding contributions to promote sustainability in public works. Sustainability is accomplished by the efficient and cost-effective delivery of infrastructure in an environmentally and socially responsible way that ensures the best choice in the long term. Up to two Sustainability Practices Awards are presented annually in the following categories: Individual or Program/Agency/Organization. This award is sponsored by the Sustainability Committee.

City of Raleigh, NC: The City of Raleigh annual Environmental Awards Program recognizes individuals and organizations that are good stewards of the environment in their community. Nominees/applicants must reside or operate within the City of Raleigh, the Raleigh extra-territorial jurisdiction (ETJ), or the utility service area.

Texas Environmental Excellence Awards: These Texas Environmental Excellence Awards (TEEA) from the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) celebrate the efforts of citizens, communities, businesses, and organizations to preserve and protect the Texas environment. The public may nominate an individual, community, company, or organization for an award. They can also nominate themselves.