

# Arvada Sustainability Advisory Committee (ASAC) Minutes

September 10, 2025, 5:30 pm – 7:30 pm  
Hybrid meeting: City Hall, 3rd Floor CCR Room + Zoom Meeting

[Virtual meeting room LINK](#)

Meeting ID: 863 1885 2028 | Passcode: 603918

## Membership Attendance:

Name, Role	Term Exp	Attendance	Name, Role	Term Exp	Attendance
Dar-Lon Chang, Chair	2026	X	Kristin Klipka, Member	2028	X
Kia Ruiz, Vice Chair	2027	X	Krystle Morey, Member	2026	X
Harriet Hall, Secretary	2027	V	Laurel Mattrey, Member	2026	A
Randy Moorman, Council Liaison	NA	X	Mark Jelinske, Member	2027	A
Aaron Coffeen, Member	2026	A	Michelle Martin, Member	2027	X
Alex Pray, Member	2027	X	Rachael Smallwood, Member	2028	A
Emma Boff, Member	2027	X	Marissa LaPorta, Member	2028	X
Haley Hall, Member	2028	X			
Steven Russell, Staff Liaison		X	Arvada Team Guests:		
Eric Lewin, Staff Liaison		A	Kyley Flynn		V
Jaqueline Rhoades, Staff Liaison		A			
Public					
X = Present, in person V = Virtual participant A = Absent					

## Minutes

### 5:30 p.m. Convene

- Convened at: 5:33
- Darlon did the Land Acknowledgement
- *Approval of August 2025 Minutes*
  - This occurred later in the middle of staff updates, when committee members realized they skipped it.
  - Kia motioned, Emma seconded, and ASAC approved unanimously.

### **5:35 p.m. Public Comment (3 min/ speaker)**

- Tory Fink
  - Educator, Arvada Resident, Arts and Culture Commission
  - Artist in residence program at landfill in SF, CA
    - Gather materials from landfill
    - Produces art
  - Logistics challenging at Arvada, but SW staff about commissioning recycled art
    - Educational, entertaining, motivational piece
    - Wearing Thomas Danbow (sp) shirt; an artist who uses recycled materials to make large troll statues
  - Education around landfill/diversion, tours
  - Talked about a new program to educate youth on recycling/diversion/ sustainability through art
    - Wanted to reach out to get a convo started
    - Kia has a connection, will connect/ talk about it
    - Randy: we can do a tour of ecocycle recovery center by boulder
    - Emma: Can we get materials from the bulky item events?
  - Commission meets first weds of month
  - Let's connect on next steps
    - Randy provided contact info for Ecocycle
- David Vega
  - Festivals commission, CU Den Susty Committee
  - Invited a rep from ASAC to visit Festivals Commission
  - DV is Co-chair for Summer Fest; wants to do green events/ waste diversion
    - DV has influence here, lets target this event in particular
    - Let's get into these meetings and move beyond general representation to collaboration
  - Also- susty committee at CU Denver;
    - Met startup called driven plastics; they put an additive in asphalt that's made of recycled plastic
    - The startup looks like it's raising good money, launching pilots, but no contact here at Arvada; would like to make a connection.
  - Randy: wants to plant a seed: R Cups at festivals
    - DV: agreed, this is a missed opportunity

### **5:50 p.m. General Business**

- Updates from Committee members
  - Kia: Neighborhood leaders meeting focused on wildfire preparedness; another session on on yard waste gathering, may have gotten a grant. Neighborhood grants offered.
    - Alex: Possibility of compost rolloff through Republic; we could contact about possibilities.
    - Kia: we have talked to Republic about grants
  - Kristi: started google doc on monthly sustainability newsletter
    - This month did a feature on thrifting
    - Looking for community highlights: MVNC, whatever you think is cool/a win for susty
      - Kristi needs help filling in content; contact Kristi or add to the doc

- Steven: we are also setting up an inbox on Trello you can send content like events to. Will share address on follow-up
- Dar-Lon: Jeffco school board voting on climate initiative to incorporate sustainability curriculum and culture; KSAs from curriculum around working toward sustainable future, getting sustainability recognized as a responsibility
  - Vote tomorrow at school board meeting. Late vote around 9
  - Challenge exacerbated by shooting today at Evergreen
    - When there's turmoil it's hard for students and general public to focus on climate action
- Alex presented an analysis of Xcel data on renewable energy transition.
 

Highlights:

  - 42% carbon free energy mix; mostly wind
  - Overall emissions reduction, largely due to using natural gas over coal and participation in larger balancing area market that allows wind/solar to reach economies of scale
  - 24/23 is benchmark of CASP; we saw an 8.2% decrease; likely largely due to warmer winter and less gas usage
  - Numerous programs available including: renewables subscription model, onsite solar, demand response programs (i.e. saver switch; unpopular program), EV programs, and Energy efficiency programs
    - 3 Groups of programs examined in detail:
      - Traditional DSM (demand-side management)
      - Beneficial Electrification (BE)
      - Clean Heat Plan (CHP)
    - Randy: As a homeowner, what's the best, most accessible resource to engage with Xcel? Website?
      - Alex will send links in slides; for whole home program: Have to enroll in program first, get energy audit, go from there
    - Alex observation: LED lighting was a low-cost easy and quick efficiency gain, but we're approaching saturation where most that are going to transition have already done so
    - Randy: Would love to see something happen with the chamber on this (home energy efficiency programs); thinks that it will be easiest to make headway with Chamber by growing movement from inside
    - Dar-Lon: What's the cost of business energy assessments v residential?
      - Alex: Most biz assessments are free; cost for implementation depends on scope of work
      - participation is flat despite free starting point;
        - speculation: Xcel changes branding a lot, appeals to many different groups, so the outreach materials may be confusing to some customers
    - Xcel will spend something like 440 million dollars over next 4 yrs
    - Future for clean heat plan funding is unknown
  - State and federal programs
    - State Heat Pump Tax Credits 33% of credit passed to customer and remainder to contractor
      - Ramping down

- Federal tax credits
  - IRA funded credits going away at end of year
  - EV credits going away this month
  - EV chargers going away next year
- IRA funding for rebates from state via Homes Electrification and Appliance Rebates (HEAR)
  - Income qualified
  - covers appliances
  - Administered by CEO but fed has to approve program; launch getting pushed down the road
- Resources:
  - Rewiring America
  - Southwest Energy Efficiency Project (SWEET)
  - Beneficial Electrification League of CO (BEL-CO)
- Updates from Council Liaison
  - Yesterday workshop on boards and commissions:
    - Staff proposed revisions to bylaws, structure, roles of committees - Adopting best practices from International City/County Management Association (ICMA)
    - 3 things staff asked for input:
      - Leadership for boards and commissions: 1 year terms, cycle out to give others the opportunity to fill leadership roles
        - This will foster growth and development by thinking about
      - Proposed Total term limit 8 years (ASAC bylaws currently limited to 12 years of service total)
        - So many people apply to this committee, annually
        - We only have a few slots to fill with numerous applicants; limiting terms will spread out the opportunity
        - Compromise proposed: an option to take a year off then come back after finishing 8 years
      - Council role:
        - Only on ASAC and housing; Council rep is a voting member
          - this is not a best practice
        - Suggested changing to more of a liaison role
          - It's helpful to take opp to give updates on council, take questions, dialogue, etc.
        - One concern that was brought up is that presence of formal leadership role may impact dynamics of group; i.e. symbolic presence may shut down convo
        - In liaison format, may be that council member only attends top of meeting to give updates/take questions, then leave
- Another thing:
  - Develop annual work plan, get council input
- All committee members recently asked to complete a survey. The results informed this preso
- Kia: IF we go in front of council with a work plan, would we have dialogue?
  - Randy: Yes, that's the intent
- Alex: curious how council members get assigned to commissions

- Randy: At start of each year or after elections, council divvies up roles informally
    - Also conversation around the interview process
      - TONS of applicants sent to council, have to score/narrow down to 5 ppl they want to interview; and the interviews are brief
      - Talked about staff involvement in the process; i.e. staff does first cut
      - Possibly invite staff to interview process
      - Advocated for longer interviews with applicants
    - Krystle: It all sounds very productive; could see how dynamic could interfere, but likes having Randy on council
      - Alex knows when and how to ignore Randy ;-)
    - Krystle: supportive of staff being involved
  - Another thing: Before we've talked about doing geothermal; state runs something
    - For individual homeowner, this is very expensive
    - Are commercial, MFU buildings more efficient?
      - Dar-Lon not familiar
    - Alex: we need a real ice rink if we get geothermal in olde town
- Updates from Staff Liaison
  - Guest speaker: Kylee Flynn, Arvada's Chief Building Officer; topic: Building decarbonization and code updates
    - Time constraints we're complying with; about 20 HBs
    - Moving from 2018 code to 2024; this is a big jump; normally we adopt every 3 years, but there was a delay in getting 2024 energy code
    - Very significant changes; very big rollout
    - Working on staff training, training for the public
    - History: 1st Arvada code in 1950s
      - First was 1.5" thick, now it's about 2.5 ft tall
    - Plan for energy:
      - Current house bill about adopting some energy bill
      - If we adopt before July 26 we adopt Mod EV/solar code
      - If we adopt after, have to adopt LECC
      - Curr plan: adopt portions of LECC that will keep us in compliance and help us step up a bit further beyond to adopt changes in carbon code
        - Will be adopted directly, not as an appendix; so it will be one comprehensive code
      - We have many steps, there's a whole process; in progress
        - Building Code Advisory Board review
        - 11/6 Open House meeting to go thru changes
          - ASAC invited
        - Get in front of council in January
    - Brand new to the position; but worked with the city previously, so very familiar with code, has allowed her to jump in
    - Steven noted Kylee's work with kudos for taking on and accomplishing much, but still much to do.
    - Steven: we're pursuing over 1 million in funding to support this work.

- DRCOG Building Policy Collaborative Sub-Award/grant: Two FTEs to support the community and implement code with clear checklists and codes. Also will upgrade software.
  - Complementary CO Energy Office (CEO) Building Code Adoption & Enforcement grant: Grant to cover cost of hiring a contractor for training staff
  - Local IMPACT grant: possibly something related to geothermal.
- Two additional grants pursued. Over a million dollars being pursued.
- 11 different codes needing work, so huge job!
- Randy Hail resistant shingles??? Wind and fire ratings that must be met, but doesn't specifically know about hail. Randy says some cities now require them.
  - Kyley: Nothing in code currently.
  - Krystle asked about greywater code.
    - Kyley: we have opted out
- Kyley: There are tons of heat pumps being installed but many problems with them. Over 189 this year. Contractors not reporting correct info. Missing what is replacement versus new system, and requirements for calculations for appropriate sizing. Last year 38. Permit data will be analyzed. Over 1000 HVAC through the Xcel program last year.
- Misc logistics
  - Google Drive
    - Adding shared folder to Drive. ASAC members will have access
    - Can use this space to store reference material & data, collaborate, etc.
    - Must be logged into google
  - Updating records
    - Many minutes packets are missing. Steven asked ASAC members to check email inboxes for missing packets
  - Food allergies - notify Officers and Staff if you have a food allergy
  - Attendance requirement
    - A few ASAC Members are over the limit for absences, or close to it. Steven will reach out 1:1. Members who exceed limit need to provide written explanation for absences to the Committee.
  - Nametags being ordered for committee members
- Arvada hosting FRSC meeting in October/November at AAC
  - 11/5
  - Staff asked for 1-2 volunteers to cover entry table
- CAA's EPR program plan
  - Public comment open until 9/14:  
<https://cdphe.colorado.gov/hm/epr-program>
  - Update webinar on 9/22; Link:  
[https://zoom.us/webinar/register/WN\\_99Ng30PXQ\\_6g1IVyhrFN1Q#/registration](https://zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_99Ng30PXQ_6g1IVyhrFN1Q#/registration)
- Communications Plan and Susty Newsletter
  - Kudos to Kristi for taking leadership
  - First revived newsletter just went out
  - Contribute to Kristi's google doc

- ASAC Monthly sustainability living tip
  - Community highlights
  - Events
- Waste Diversion Action Plan (WDAP) update
  - Completed markup
  - C3 STEPS contracted for “light touch” project:
    - Reconcile our edits
    - Present to Council
    - Future opp: implementation
  - Steven was asked about the question about timeline and strategy with presenting WDAP on 10/28.
    - In a follow up conversation with Jacqueline, the strategy was clarified:
      - We’re not going to seek a vote on WDAP formal adoption; rather, we
      - Workshop WDAP with council on 10/28. We already had this date booked and we’re
- 
- CASP update
- Old Towne Recycling Pilot update
  - Randy asked what the recycling looks like?
    - Steve: Over all contamination rate 60% Percent. Will have recommendations.
  - Randy: any notable contaminants we should address directly?
    - Data only includes 3 notes on contaminants, but dog poop and cigarette butts were mentioned.
  - Randy: Lafayette staff presentation suggested as resource.
  - Comment: Should we share with festivals committee?
    - Randy: Many events are BID events so no locus of control
  - Steven: reporting running out of time to prepare a presentation for today, and promised a full presentation with better info next month, including qualitative data and recommendations.
  - Alex- re: scheduling council presentation.. We’re presenting WDAP to one council then asking for a vote from the next Council? Isn’t that the issue we had with CASP scheduling?
  - Steven: That’s what we have scheduled. The timing for scheduling with council this time of year is tricky; November is a wash with council onboarding and December is booked out plus limited by the holidays. The impression from staff is this may be acceptable for WDAP but probably shouldn’t be done with CASP since it’s a little more complex and sensitive.
  - Randy asked about incorporating waste diversion into CASP as a possible pathway.
    - Steven: This is not the plan, currently. There’s natural alignment between the two, so they complement each other well. WDAP can stand on its own, but SR will consider this. WDAP has good research backing and modeling.
  - Steven: Re- scheduling: Steven will check with leadership to see if the schedule for WDAP needs to be addressed and get back to us.

**6:40 p.m. Activity: Defining Sustainability**

**7:20 p.m. New Business**

- Neighborhood CASP party at Geos 9/24. 5:30 - 7 Geos tour with Steve if interested. Dar-Lon will send an e-mail. 7:00 party.

**7:30 p.m. Adjourn**

- Adjourned at: 7:34



# State of energy programs

Alex Pray

9/10/25

Presented to Arvada Sustainability Advisory Committee



# Background and overview

- I work for Platte River Power Authority as an engineer in their Distributed Energy Solutions department
- Often coordinating with/tracking Xcel activities for alignment of offerings and providing customer support
- Started by reviewing [Xcel's community energy reports for Arvada](#)
- Summarize what Arvadans can expect from utility, state, and federal programs

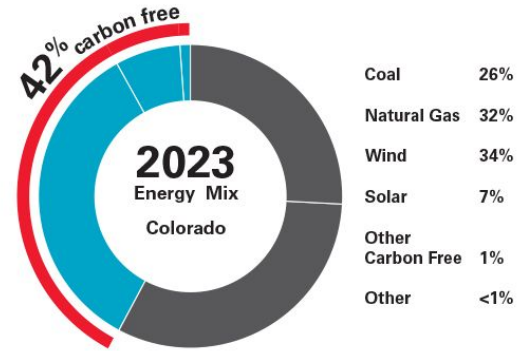


@NINJASKETCH

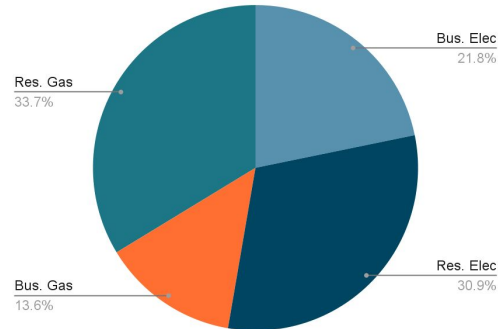
1. Xcel generation profile
2. Xcel program participation in Arvada
3. Future of Xcel programs
4. State and Federal programs

# Xcel generation profile and emissions rates

- Renewables increase by a couple % each year
- Electric emissions rates have decreased by an average of 7% per year since 2022
  - Gas emissions rates remain constant
- Arvada emissions decreased by 8.2% from 2023 to 2024 despite increase in customer
  - Warmer winter resulted in significantly less gas usage



2024 Arvada Emissions (468,160 MTCO<sub>2</sub>)



# Xcel program participation - Arvada

## Renewable programs

- Renewable subscription
  - 3.1% of energy
  - 5.1% of customers
  - Little change in participation
- Onsite solar
  - 7.5% of energy
  - 9.9% of customers
  - 8.7% annual participation increase in res.

## Demand Response (DR) and Electric vehicle (EV) programs

- Residential AC
  - Saver switch + Thermostat
  - 16.8% of residential customers
  - Participation decreasing 2% annually
- EV chargers
  - Averaging 44 per year
  - Increase in income qualified (IQ)
- EV charging
  - New in 2024
  - 37 participants

## Energy Efficiency (EE) programs

- Res. Audits/HES
  - 199 in 2022
  - 663 in 2023
- Bus. assessment participation is flat
- Drop in most program participation
  - 20% decrease in savings
- Increases in IQ
- Increase in nonprofit
- Programs shifting to “Clean Heat”

# Current and future Xcel programs

## Traditional DSM (demand side management)

- [Residential insulation](#)
- [Whole home efficiency](#)
- [Refrigerator recycling](#)
- Efficiency kits
- [Business energy assessments](#)

## BE (beneficial electrification) and CHP (Clean Heat Plan)

- BE added officially in 2024
  - Heat Pumps
    - [Air source, ground source, water heaters](#)
- CHP is a result of SB21-264
  - 2025 bonuses
    - Heat pumps: 2x
    - Air sealing and insulation: 1.5x
  - Future funding levels unknown

# State and Federal programs

## State HP tax credit

- Credit is for installers (33% of credit must be passed through to customer)
- Was set to ramp down in 2026, will decrease even more due to state rev. constraints

## Federal tax credits (25C, 25D)

- One Big Beautiful Bill repealing IRA tax credits
- Timeline varies for energy efficiency, EVs, and EV charges

## IRA funded rebates from State (Homes Electrification and Appliance Rebates HEAR)

- Eligibility based on AMI (<80%, 80%-150%)
- Administered by CEO, expected launch this winter\*
- Up to \$14k/household, separate program for large MF

# Additional references and resources

<a href="#"><u>Rewiring America</u></a>	Tools and calculators for homeowners and renters
<a href="#"><u>Southwest Energy Efficiency Project (SWEET)</u></a>	Regional resource for news, policy advocacy Includes building codes, transportation
<a href="#"><u>Beneficial Electrification League of Colorado (BEL-CO)</u></a>	Coalition of local stakeholders Resources for homeowners and contractors

# Defining Sustainability

9/10/2025

# Before we start...

## Why?

- Not unanimous agreement on the definition of sustainability
- Different regions have different key considerations
- Frame our work with CASP
- Set an agreed-upon destination: our vision for a sustainable future

## Sustainability is...

- A philosophy of resource management
- A framework for decision-making and balancing competing priorities and needs
- Resources → Environmental, Economic, and Social
- Responsive to local context

# Existing Definitions

# Brundtland Commission Report: *Our Common Future*, 1987

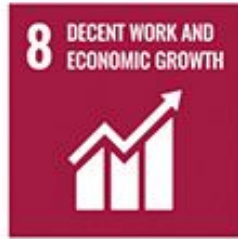
Sustainable development is development that meets the needs of the future without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

# US EPA definition

Sustainability is based on a simple principle: Everything that we need for our survival and well-being depends, either directly or indirectly, on our natural environment.

Sustainability creates and maintains the conditions under which humans and nature can exist in productive harmony, that permit fulfilling the social, economic and other requirements of present and future generations.

# UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)



# People, Planet, Profit



## The “**Triple Bottom Line**”

- A typical framing for sustainability practices, especially purchasing and planning
- Talks about the types of resources we need to sustain
- Help make the case for sustainability actions

# Boulder County definition



## DEFINITION OF SUSTAINABILITY

Within this plan, *sustainability* refers to the use, development, and protection of resources for Boulder County residents.

In this context, “resources” include land, air, and water, along with the inherent value of the natural resources, biodiversity, and life-supporting functions associated with them; energy and materials for development and habitation; the essentially rural, low-density character of the unincorporated county; the uniquely historic, cultural, and geographic composition of distinct rural communities within the county; the diversity of economic activities and opportunities available to individuals;

and the people who continue to shape our developed and natural landscapes.

In addition, it is important to call attention to the linkages between environmental, social, and economic sustainability. For example, the county’s sustainability practices seek to support and enhance the diversity of economic activities, such as viable local agriculture, green jobs creation, and multimodal transportation, as well as to support the well-being of our residents.

The strategies set out to achieve the plan’s targets are actions that support, maintain, conserve, and enhance the environmental, economic, and social systems on which we depend. Achieving sustainability may demand substantial departures from past and present actions, as well as a fundamental commitment to conserving finite resources. Therefore, sustainability requires a coordinated approach to planning and public policy that involves public participation.

Success depends on the widespread understanding of the critical relationship between people and the environment, an appreciation of the interrelationships among the systems that sustain human existence, and the will to make necessary changes. We not only have a relationship with and depend on nature’s systems, but we are also a part of them.

Similarly, we seek to ensure affordable access to clean energy, efficiency improvements, transit, and housing for all members of our community.

- Within this plan, sustainability refers to the use, development, and protection of resources for Boulder County residents.
- In this context, “resources” include land, air, and water, along with the inherent value of the natural resources, biodiversity, and life supporting functions associated with them; energy and materials for development and habitation; the essentially rural, low-density character of the unincorporated county; the uniquely historic, cultural, and geographic composition of distinct rural communities within the county; the diversity of economic activities and opportunities available to individuals; and the people who continue to shape our developed and natural landscapes.
- In addition, it is important to call attention to the linkages between environmental, social, and economic sustainability. ...

# Discussion

What did you like about the sample definitions?

What did you not like about the sample definitions?

# What does sustainability look like for Arvada?



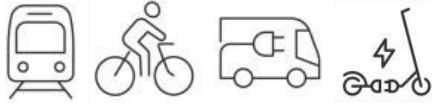
Greenhouse Gas  
Emissions  
Reductions



Land Stewardship  
& Wildlife  
Protection



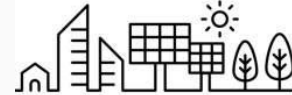
Parks & Open  
Space



Multi-modal  
Transportation



Susty Purchasing  
& Management  
Practices



Built Environment  
& Urban Design



Community  
Engagement



Recycling &  
Toward Zero  
Waste



Susty Energy &  
Green Buildings



Water & Energy  
Conservation

## Summary

On 9/10/2025 the Arvada Sustainability Advisory Committee participated in a workshop to help define the concept of sustainability, as it pertains to Arvada. Participants were provided with 5 sample definitions and frameworks, then were asked to provide their thoughts on each one (pros, cons, and general impressions). Finally, the respondents were each asked to expand on their takeaways from the activity.

The five definitions provided were:

1. The Brundtland report's definition of sustainable development
2. The US Environmental Protection Agency's current definition of sustainability
3. The Sustainable Development Goals Framework
4. The Triple-bottom-line framework
5. The definition from Boulder County's sustainability plan

Handwritten responses were provided to the facilitator who transcribed them manually.

Responses were then analyzed using a customized GPT instructed to 1) group the original responses by theme, 2) provide key takeaways from participants' responses, and 3) interpret and summarize respondents' recommendations. Finally, the GPT was asked to summarize overall takeaways and provide 3 sample definitions based on the respondents' feedback.

## Brundtland Feedback Analysis

### 1. Themes with Original Comments Grouped

#### *Widespread Recognition / Use*

- Haley: "most widely used and accepted; wide variety of potential applications"
- Marissa: "Common definition"
- Alex: "Does provide motivation in simple terms"

#### *Focus on Development*

- Haley: "focus on 'development' - not as applicable for residents/ more commercial focus"
- Marissa: "only talks about development; what about living, working, etc."
- Alex: "Only focused on 'development'"
- Krystle: "Too focused on development"

#### *Vagueness and Clarity Issues*

- Haley: "also pretty vague"
- Kristi: "Repetitive/kinda confusing to read"

#### *Needs vs. Thriving*

- Haley: “focus on ‘needs’ but no emphasis on maximizing well-being”
- Alex: “Only says ‘meets needs’; want to thrive, not just survive”

#### *Future Generations (Uncertainty, Representation)*

- Dar-Lon: “Future generations - what are their needs? Same needs as present? How to get representative from future? What are needs of future?”
- Marissa: “Needs of the future makes it seem only extractive. What about preserving natural resources? What is future generations”
- Emma: “How do we know what the needs of the future are? Seems like we are constantly learning how to improve”
- Randy: “Focus on current & future generations needs; helps think about impacts of what we do now has on future generations”
- Krystle: “future focused; too easy to argue away that future generations will ‘figure it out’ with less resources and new innovations”
- Kristi: “Pros: Mentions future generations... Cons: Doesn’t mention the present”
- Harriet: “like the inclusion of future and present; Knowing what needs of future generations might be seems difficult”

#### *Balance Between Present and Future*

- Kristi: “Cons: Doesn’t mention the present”
- Harriet: “like the inclusion of future and present”

#### *Systems Orientation*

- Krystle: “More systems focused”
- Emma: “Overall ‘gist’ = be thoughtful with what we have to ensure enough is left for the next group”

#### *Indigenous / Cultural Perspectives*

- Kia: “Similar to seventh generation principle that you get w interdependency & non-dualism; Aligned w native thought minus sacrificing now for generations of future; Violates doctrine of discovery that led to our extractionist tendencies”

## **2. Key Takeaways**

1. The Brundtland definition is familiar and influential, but respondents found it vague and limited.
2. The emphasis on “development” is problematic; multiple stakeholders (Haley, Marissa, Alex, Krystle) said it frames sustainability too commercially and leaves out living, community, or ecological aspects.
3. The focus on “needs” is seen as insufficient. Respondents (Haley, Alex) wanted language about thriving and well-being, not just survival.
4. Future generations are central but difficult to define. Stakeholders questioned how to know or represent future needs (Dar-Lon, Marissa, Emma, Harriet), while some noted the risk of assuming future innovation will solve today’s problems (Krystle).

5. Present generations are underemphasized. Kristi noted the absence of current needs, while others wanted balance between present and future (Harriet).
6. Some found value in systems framing. A few saw the definition encouraging systems thinking (Krystle, Emma).
7. Indigenous perspectives highlight alternative framings. Kia noted resonance with the Seventh Generation principle but critiqued the Brundtland definition as rooted in extractive, colonial worldviews.

### **3. Recommendations for Organizational Definition**

- Acknowledge intergenerational responsibility but explicitly balance current and future generations.
- Replace or broaden the term “development.” Use language like living, thriving, preserving, regenerating, and community well-being to avoid a solely commercial/economic focus.
- Emphasize thriving and well-being. Go beyond “needs” to include quality of life, equity, and ecological health.
- Recognize uncertainty about the future. Position sustainability as a process of adaptive learning rather than a fixed prescription of future “needs.”
- Embed ecological and systems perspectives. Address not only human needs but also preservation and regeneration of natural systems.
- Incorporate Indigenous perspectives where relevant. Principles like Seventh Generation thinking and interdependency can enrich the definition and address concerns about extractive framings.
- Be concise but clear. Stakeholders valued simplicity, but vagueness should be avoided by explicitly naming the balance between people, environment, and long-term well-being.

## **EPA Feedback Analysis**

### **1. Themes with Original Comments Grouped**

#### *Clarity and Length*

- Haley: “Saying it’s simple makes ppl more likely to agree”
- Marissa: “Overall a little stale but good”
- Emma: “Whoa that’s a lot of text!”
- Randy: “Too long/wordy”
- Kristi: “Cons: long”
- Alex: “Long but hits some great points”

#### *Focus on the Natural Environment*

- Haley: “specific to nature/environment”
- Dar-Lon: “Focus on natural environment”
- Alex: “Important focus on natural environment”
- Randy: “like the focus on the nat’l environment —> humans & nature coexisting”
- Krystle: “Focus on nature”
- Harriet: “It recognizes the importance of the natural environment which the previous one didn't do.”

#### *Humans & Nature in Harmony*

- Dar-Lon: “humans & nature in productive harmony”
- Alex: “‘productive harmony’ <— Great!!”
- Emma: “Like harmony”
- Krystle: “<3 productive harmony; feels a bit unattainable or irrelevant at a city scale”
- Kristi: “Mentions human and nature relationship”

#### *Present and Future Generations*

- Dar-Lon: “what are the ‘other requirements’ present AND future”
- Emma: “Struggle with requirements for future generations; We don’t know what they are”
- Krystle: “future focused”
- Kristi: “Like the mention of present and future”

#### *Needs, Well-being, Survival*

- Haley: “Also focus on ‘needs’”
- Krystle: “reference well-being/ survival”
- Kristi: “Includes social requirements”

#### *Systems Perspective*

- Krystle: “systems focused”

#### *Critiques of Human-Centric Assumptions*

- Kia: “Contains fallacy that we have self-control for limits of our well-being, productive harmony and base economic requirements; Gives way too much credit to humans w no lens of inequality for the standards of capitalism; Acknowledges that we are dependent on planetary services”

#### *Overall Value*

- Marissa: “Like stating the principle”
- Harriet: “It recognizes the importance of the natural environment which the previous one didn't do.”

## **2. Key Takeaways**

1. Environmental focus is widely appreciated. Many stakeholders valued that this definition explicitly connects humans and the natural environment (Haley, Dar-Lon, Alex, Randy, Krystle, Harriet).

2. The phrase “productive harmony” resonated strongly. Several stakeholders highlighted this as a positive element (Dar-Lon, Alex, Emma, Krystle), though Krystle noted it may feel unrealistic at the local level.
3. The definition is considered too long and wordy. Nearly all respondents commented on its length, which some saw as reducing clarity or accessibility (Emma, Randy, Kristi).
4. The balance of present and future was seen as a strength. Several liked that it acknowledges both (Dar-Lon, Kristi), though others struggled with the vagueness of defining future requirements (Emma).
5. Some concerns about “needs” language remain. Similar to Brundtland, respondents noted its reliance on needs/well-being language, which may feel limiting (Haley, Krystle).
6. Systems thinking is noted positively. The definition pushes respondents to think about interconnectedness (Krystle).
7. Equity and power dynamics are missing. Kia critiqued the framing for over-crediting human control, ignoring inequality, and reflecting capitalist assumptions.
8. Overall, the EPA definition is respected but considered wordy and possibly outdated. Several described it as “stale” or too text-heavy but still solid in principle (Marissa, Kristi).

### **3. Recommendations for Organizational Definition**

- Retain the emphasis on human–nature balance. Explicitly highlight coexistence and interdependence, potentially with language like “harmony” or “balance,” but acknowledge realistic challenges at the local scale.
- Simplify the language. Avoid long, technical phrasing that stakeholders found inaccessible. Strive for brevity and clarity while retaining substance.
- Include both present and future generations. Keep this dual focus but clarify that sustainability means adapting to uncertain and evolving future needs.
- Move beyond “needs” to well-being and thriving. Address survival, equity, and quality of life in clear terms.
- Acknowledge systems thinking. Reinforce that sustainability connects human, natural, and social systems.
- Integrate equity explicitly. Consider phrasing that recognizes unequal impacts, access, and responsibilities, addressing Kia’s concern about the absence of a justice lens.

# SDG Feedback Analysis

## 1. Themes with Original Comments Grouped

### *Comprehensive / Broad Scope*

- Haley: “comprehensive; too broad in scope... so less applicable”
- Marissa: “Covers social & economic (which isn’t present in other definitions)”
- Alex: “Covers a lot”
- Randy: “Too much!”
- Kristi: “Even more comprehensive; Shows how sustainability is connected with pretty much all other issues and how far reaching it is”
- Harriet: “Agree with most of what is in it however”

### *Applicability / Scale*

- Haley: “we’re not solving poverty, hunger, education directly w CASP, so less applicable”
- Marissa: “Might be too broad for a CASP?”
- Alex: “hard to focus, set clear vision/goals with such a broad range”
- Krystle: “even more unattainable in some categories from a city scale”

### *Clarity and Accessibility*

- Haley: “I wouldn’t call this a definition; too complex”
- Emma: “Like they’re nice goals(?)... I initially feel really defeated”
- Krystle: “more understandable for typ. 6th grade reading level; phrases don’t mean much w/o clear and concrete goals tied to each area”
- Kristi: “Cons: Too much information to digest?”
- Harriet: “Way too complicated to digest”

### *Measuring Progress*

- Haley: “Difficult to show progress”
- Krystle: “phrases don’t mean much w/o clear and concrete goals tied to each area”

### *Intersectionality / Systems Connections*

- Marissa: “Can tie each goal/strategy to one or more SDGs”
- Alex: “great highlight of intersectionality”
- Emma: “Like how they are all interconnected”
- Kristi: “Shows how sustainability is connected with pretty much all other issues”

### *Equity and Justice Concerns*

- Kia: “1 and 2- can we be trusted to make sure others who do not look like us will have enough? 10 REDUCED INEQUALITIES may need more... 12 Can we be trusted w mindful consumption... 16 which institutions will be created equal? 17 PARTNERSHIPS”
- Randy: “Do like inclusion of poverty, hunger, health, equality”

### *Design and Communication*

- Emma: “I do like the visual design(?) of this”
- Kristi: “Images=easy to understand”

### *Recognition / Resources*

- Marissa: “Many companies/ municipalities use this”
- Kristi: “Internationally recognized standards; More resources to take advantage of/point community members towards”

### *Present vs. Future*

- Dar-Lon: “doesn’t distinguish present and future needs”

## **2. Key Takeaways**

1. The SDGs are seen as comprehensive and far-reaching, covering social, economic, and environmental aspects of sustainability (Haley, Marissa, Alex, Kristi).
2. However, the breadth makes them feel less practical for local use. Stakeholders repeatedly said they are too broad, overwhelming, or unattainable at a city scale (Haley, Marissa, Alex, Krystle, Harriet).
3. Clarity and digestibility are mixed. Some praised the accessibility of images and simple phrasing (Krystle, Kristi, Emma), but others felt the framework was too complex or overwhelming to grasp as a “definition” (Haley, Harriet, Emma).
4. Progress and measurability are a concern. Without local adaptation, the goals feel hard to track or apply (Haley, Krystle).
5. Intersectionality is valued. Several liked that the SDGs show interconnections across issues and demonstrate sustainability’s broad reach (Marissa, Alex, Emma, Kristi).
6. Equity is recognized but questioned. Kia raised skepticism about whether society can achieve meaningful equity in areas like poverty, consumption, and institutional fairness. Others (Randy, Kristi) appreciated the inclusion of equity-related goals.
7. Visuals are seen as a strength. The colorful, accessible design makes the SDGs easier to engage with compared to text-heavy definitions (Emma, Kristi).
8. International credibility is a strength. Some valued that the SDGs are widely recognized and could connect local work to global frameworks (Marissa, Kristi).
9. Future orientation is underdeveloped. Unlike Brundtland or EPA definitions, this framework does not explicitly distinguish present vs. future needs (Dar-Lon).

## **3. Recommendations for Organizational Definition**

- Balance breadth with local focus. Draw inspiration from the SDGs’ comprehensiveness but adapt to city scale with a narrower, more actionable framing.

- Avoid being overwhelming. Keep the definition concise and digestible, while using visuals or frameworks as supplemental communication tools rather than the definition itself.
- Integrate equity explicitly. Carry forward the SDGs' attention to justice, inequality, and poverty, while grounding these in the city's context.
- Emphasize interconnections. Preserve the systems-based framing that links environment, economy, and society, while making clear how these intersect locally.
- Ensure measurability. Tie sustainability language to metrics and monitoring systems so that progress can be shown clearly.
- Clarify present and future orientation. Add explicit language about balancing immediate needs with long-term well-being, something the SDGs themselves don't fully articulate.
- Leverage global recognition. Reference alignment with the SDGs for credibility and resources, but avoid adopting them wholesale as the city's "definition."

## Triple Bottom Line Feedback Analysis

### 1. Themes with Original Comments Grouped

#### *Balance / Breadth*

- Haley: "feels balanced; acknowledges other priorities in a fair manner"
- Randy: "Like the inclusion of economic sustainability & resource consumption; As well as social sustainability"
- Harriet: "It captures the breadth of the previous one in a much less complicated way"

#### *Clarity and Simplicity*

- Alex: "Easy to communicate & get people on board"
- Kristi: "Pros: Appeals to business people; Short and simple; Includes social and environmental"

#### *Cheesiness / Vagueness*

- Haley: "'planet' sounds cheesy/ greenwashy"
- Kristi: "Cons: Not very specific/very vague compared to the last one"

#### *Corporate / Capitalist Framing*

- Marissa: "outdated corporate(?) definition; TBL refers to income, which a city doesn't have; Strong no on this one"
- Krystle: "good for CIP; too focused on current system of capitalism; doesn't talk about scale or systems"

- Kia: “Will environment be given same playing field as economic especially in time of downturn; What order of social resource? With people as labor or interconnected ...?... as currency?”
- Emma: “like that economics is included(?) since(?) we live in a capitalism world; Struggle that for some to(?) be done(?) it has to be worth the \$\$”

#### *Profit Dimension (Strength or Weakness)*

- Dar-Lon: “Appealing to profit-seekers”
- Alex: “‘profit’ inclusion can bring in businesses & more conservative voices”

#### *Definition vs. Tool*

- Haley: “not an actual definition listed, more of a visual”
- Kristi: “Feels like it could be better for city/municipal oriented stuff (like procurement processes) but not community facing communication”

#### *Questions / Ambiguities*

- Dar-Lon: “how to define bottom line? What about if not in vein diagram intersection?”
- Kristi: “Do people agree on social/environmental/etc.?”

## **2. Key Takeaways**

1. Balance is appreciated. Some respondents liked that TBL acknowledges multiple priorities (Haley, Randy, Harriet).
2. Simplicity and communicability are strengths. Several saw TBL as easy to explain and useful for business or public buy-in (Alex, Kristi).
3. Profit dimension is divisive. Some valued its ability to engage businesses and conservative voices (Dar-Lon, Alex), while others saw it as overly corporate or irrelevant for cities (Marissa, Krystle, Kia).
4. The framework is criticized as vague or outdated. Stakeholders noted it lacks specificity, feels “corporate,” and doesn’t reflect municipal or community contexts (Marissa, Krystle, Kristi).
5. Planet/greenwashing concerns. Haley flagged that “planet” sounds cheesy or superficial.
6. Equity and power dynamics questioned. Kia and others raised concerns about whether social and environmental dimensions are treated equally, especially during economic downturns.
7. Better as a tool than a definition. Multiple respondents said it works as a communication device or for internal processes (e.g., procurement, CIP) but not as a guiding definition for sustainability (Haley, Kristi).

## **3. Recommendations for Organizational Definition**

- Avoid over-reliance on corporate framing. While “profit” can resonate with businesses, your definition should translate economic sustainability into municipal and community-relevant language (e.g., prosperity, resilience, fiscal responsibility).
- Keep the balance across dimensions. Retain the TBL’s strength in acknowledging social, environmental, and economic priorities, but clarify what each means in a public-sector context.
- Ensure specificity. Move beyond a simple slogan or Venn diagram to articulate how these dimensions interrelate and how tradeoffs are managed.
- Address equity directly. Incorporate considerations of fairness and power, ensuring that “people” means more than labor or productivity.
- Use TBL as a communication bridge, not the definition itself. TBL may serve as a simplified visual or entry point for public outreach but should be supported by a richer organizational definition.
- Replace “planet” if necessary. Consider alternatives like environment or natural systems to avoid greenwashing connotations.

## Boulder County Feedback Analysis

### 1. Themes with Original Comments Grouped

#### *Length / Readability*

- Haley: “too long”
- Dar-Lon: “too long”
- Marissa: “Way too long, it should be 2–3 sentences tops”
- Alex: “Long!”
- Emma: “This is way too long”
- Randy: “too long!”
- Kristi: “Cons: Too long, should be bullet points at minimum to make it more readable”
- Harriet: “Too much text”

#### *Content Strength / Comprehensiveness*

- Dar-Lon: “Local, historic, cultural; Affordable access for all; green jobs creation”
- Marissa: “Super comprehensive but you don’t need to be”
- Krystle: “Actual meat and meaning”
- Kristi: “Like the content”

#### *Local Relevance*

- Haley: “Specific to Boulder [county]”
- Dar-Lon: “Local, historic, cultural”

- Kristi: “Pros: Like that they include local info”
- Krystle: “proper scale & relevance”

#### *Equity / Access*

- Dar-Lon: “Affordable access for all”

#### *Jobs / Economy*

- Dar-Lon: “green jobs creation”
- Kia: “Tiny shout-out to triple bottom line”

#### *Protection of Natural Resources*

- Randy: “Like protection of resources”

#### *Tone / Style*

- Kia: “Academic; Do a non-owning(?) class(?) relate to this”
- Krystle: “not realistic for 6th grade reading level”

## **2. Key Takeaways**

1. Overwhelming agreement that the definition is too long. Nearly every respondent flagged length and readability as the main issue (Haley, Marissa, Alex, Emma, Randy, Kristi, Harriet).
2. Content is strong and comprehensive. Several appreciated its substance, specificity, and inclusion of local, cultural, and economic dimensions (Dar-Lon, Marissa, Krystle, Kristi).
3. Local orientation is valued. Stakeholders liked that the definition connected to place and context (Haley, Dar-Lon, Kristi, Krystle).
4. Equity and access were noted positively. Affordable access and inclusion of green jobs reflect meaningful priorities (Dar-Lon).
5. Environmental protection is recognized. Randy specifically appreciated mention of protecting resources.
6. Tone can be overly academic. A few noted that the style may be inaccessible for general audiences (Kia, Krystle).
7. Triple Bottom Line elements present but subtle. Kia saw echoes of TBL, though it may not be explicitly balanced.

## **3. Recommendations for Organizational Definition**

- Prioritize brevity. Limit to 2–3 sentences, with optional bullet points for clarity.
- Preserve substance while simplifying. Retain meaningful content (equity, jobs, resource protection, cultural relevance) but strip out excess wording.
- Ensure accessibility. Use plain language, avoiding overly academic or technical phrasing; aim for readability at a middle-school level.
- Localize thoughtfully. Include place-specific references, but ensure wording is flexible enough to apply beyond one county or entity.

- Highlight equity and access. Keep explicit reference to fairness, affordability, and inclusion.
- Include economy alongside environment and society. Draw from the strengths of TBL framing without leaning into jargon.

## Final Takeaways

### Takeaways

- Michelle: all are framing env as a product, in a way, to be consumed; land stewardship/env preservation isn't a priority; this would be hard to communicate/get ppl to think in this way; breaking framework of economic thinking/progress as an economic pathway
- Harriet: what's missing: susty has to look at impact on people; some didn't do this at all, some did better than others; has to do with ppl and the future
- Kristi: like definitions that include ppl, social issues, as part of def for susty; we as ppl are not separate from env ; likes including social in definition and emph conservation
- Emma: UN - liked this visually, but felt defeated; big vision, not achievable any time soon ; keep it positive
- Alex: likes what we're seeing here; w/in city's scope; our scope is not the same as EPA/UN, so as lofty as our goals/vision are, we have to act locally; likes "productive harmony" - focused on outcomes,; some ppl sense susty as stopping progress, not building more, but phrasing is often about an outcome, having productivity; TBL talks about economic ; not just good for env, good for city, good for susty of city to continue being a city
- Krystle: Likes "productive harmony" ; comments re other devs- things need to be appropriately scaled/scoped into what city can accomplish/control; some devs better, left room for systems change; opposed to living in confines of systems we know
- Randy: Likes beivity over wordy; likes the. Classic, thinking about future generation needs; "coexisting" / old school interpretation/traditional understanding; UN def is everything and a bit daunting; but like the human aspects of addressing things like poverty, hunger, equality; think about city in particular for our lens; enhance/preserve our quality of life here
- Haley: SDGs way too broad; not exactly a definition; likes the graphic- could add air quality, wildfires, safety, things that important in daily life; gravitated toward simple,

applicable defs; balanced + ; we don't want to compromise areas in favor of sustainability (i.e. sustainability is costly, but if we balance with wellbeing/economics ++)

- Dar-Lon: Likes the graphic; missing affordable access for all; also missing present v future needs; leading/being a leader, inspiring other cities
- Kia: Brundtland close to seventh generation principle ; extractivism; what's missing, we have abundance, we have enough; MM transit works when we're safe, communicate, keep an eye out for each other; fallacies of self-control; city has 150 year history of extraction ; impose limits with consumption to increased quality of life
- Marissa: 7 generations principle; liked definitions that deal with future generations; likes this as a philosophy; like if our report has what the definition is, followed by the graphics piece
- Michelle: In general this ties to how I think about defining "sustainability." There can be a lot of different interpretations for somewhat vague terms like progress, or development, or social benefit. As a lot of people called out tonight, these terms can sometimes raise questions about who defines it, who benefits, who gets to decide what the acceptable level of harm or cost is for that perceived benefit, who decides which SDGs to prioritize etc. I can see some value in the flexibility of the more vague definitions (Brundtland, EPA, Triple Bottom Line), but they can also make things more complicated in some ways. I also agree with the sentiments mentioned that the SDGs feel quite overwhelming, and these can still be left up to a lot of interpretation on how they are prioritized & measured.
- For any decision we make for Arvada, I think my main concern is that we're clear about what we're planning to measure and how. Financing programs and applying consistent data collection methods is difficult (e.g. how we have no baseline measures for the waste "diversion" effort). I think for the most part, all of the principles you added to your last definition slide are great, and I would just like to see that we're able to have real metrics and reliable data attached to each.

## Takeaways Analysis

### 1. Organize Comments by Theme

#### *Environment as a Product / Extractivism*

- Michelle: "all are framing env as a product, in a way, to be consumed; land stewardship/env preservation isn't a priority; ... breaking framework of economic thinking/progress as an economic pathway."

- Kia: “Brundtland close to seventh generation principle; extractivism; ... city has 150 year history of extraction; impose limits with consumption to increased quality of life.”

#### *People, Social Issues, Equity*

- Harriet: “what’s missing: susty has to look at impact on people; some didn’t do this at all, some did better than others; has to do with ppl and the future.”
- Kristi: “like definitions that include ppl, social issues, as part of def for susty; we as ppl are not separate from env; likes including social in definition and emph conservation.”
- Dar-Lon: “missing affordable access for all.”
- Michelle: “these terms can sometimes raise questions about who defines it, who benefits, who gets to decide what the acceptable level of harm or cost is for that perceived benefit.”

#### *Future Generations & Long-Term Perspective*

- Marissa: “7 generations principle; liked definitions that deal with future generations; likes this as a philosophy.”
- Randy: “likes ... classic, thinking about future generation needs; ‘coexisting’ / old school interpretation.”
- Harriet: “has to do with ppl and the future.”

#### *Tone, Scope, & Scale*

- Emma: “UN - liked this visually, but felt defeated; big vision, not achievable any time soon; keep it positive.”
- Alex: “our scope is not the same as EPA/UN ... we have to act locally; ... some ppl sense susty as stopping progress, not building more.”
- Krystle: “things need to be appropriately scaled/scoped into what city can accomplish/control; ... opposed to living in confines of systems we know.”
- Randy: “think about city in particular for our lens; enhance/preserve our quality of life here.”
- Haley: “SDGs way too broad; ... gravitated toward simple, applicable defs.”

#### *Productive Harmony & Outcomes*

- Alex: “likes ‘productive harmony’ ... phrasing is often about an outcome, having productivity.”
- Krystle: “likes ‘productive harmony.’”
- Randy: “likes ... ‘coexisting’ / old school interpretation/traditional understanding.”

#### *Balance & Tradeoffs*

- Haley: “balanced +; we don’t want to compromise areas in favor of susty (i.e. susty is costly, but if we balance with wellbeing/economics ++).”

- Alex: “TBL talks about economic; not just good for env, good for city, good for susty of city to continue being a city.”

#### *Equity & Community Care*

- Kia: “what’s missing, we have abundance, we have enough; MM transit works when we’re safe, communicate, keep an eye out for each other.”
- Dar-Lon: “leading/being a leader, inspiring other cities.”

#### *Brevity vs. Wordiness*

- Randy: “likes brevity over wordy.”

#### *Graphics & Communication Tools*

- Emma: “liked [UN] visually.”
- Haley: “likes the graphic- could add air quality, wildfires, safety, things that important in daily life.”
- Marissa: “like if our report has what the definition is, followed by the graphics piece.”
- Dar-Lon: “likes the graphic.”

#### *Metrics, Measurement & Accountability*

- Michelle: “main concern is that we're clear about what we're planning to measure and how ... need real metrics and reliable data attached.”
- Michelle: “value in flexibility ... but vague definitions make things more complicated ... SDGs overwhelming ... left up to interpretation on how prioritized & measured.”

## **2. Key Takeaways**

1. Many felt definitions treated the environment as a product or resource, not as something to steward. Several wanted land stewardship and preservation emphasized.
2. Definitions that included people, equity, and social issues resonated most. Stakeholders stressed fairness, affordable access, and integration of social well-being with environmental health.
3. Future generations remain important, especially framed through principles like Seventh Generation. But emphasis should also remain on present needs.
4. Definitions should be appropriately scaled. Global frameworks (UN/EPA) felt overwhelming; respondents wanted local relevance and practical application for Arvada.
5. Tone should stay positive and achievable. Avoid “defeatist” framing that makes goals seem unattainable.
6. “Productive harmony” and coexistence language resonated. Stakeholders liked framing outcomes as harmonious and productive.
7. Balance across dimensions matters. Sustainability shouldn’t compromise well-being or economic viability.

8. Equity and community care are essential. Sustainability must include access, abundance, and care for one another.
9. Brevity is valued. Stakeholders prefer concise definitions over wordy, technical ones.
10. Graphics and visuals help. Many liked pairing definitions with visuals, especially ones relevant to Arvada (e.g., air quality, wildfires).
11. Clear metrics are critical. Sustainability must be tied to measurable outcomes and data to avoid vagueness or unaccountability.

### **3. Recommendations**

- Emphasize stewardship, not consumption of the environment.
- Integrate people and equity clearly — highlight fairness, access, and social well-being as inseparable from environment and economy.
- Balance present and future generations, with an emphasis on thriving for both.
- Scale goals to the local context, keeping language practical and relevant to city responsibilities.
- Frame positively and aspirationally while staying realistic.
- Use “productive harmony” or similar phrasing to emphasize balanced, outcome-oriented sustainability.
- Acknowledge tradeoffs, ensuring sustainability is not seen as competing with well-being or economic stability.
- Incorporate equity and community care, highlighting abundance, safety, and collective responsibility.
- Keep the definition concise, pairing it with supporting visuals and examples.
- Ensure measurability and accountability, making definitions actionable with clear metrics and data collection.

## **Recommendations for a Sustainability Definition for the City of Arvada**

### **1. Conciseness & Accessibility**

- Keep the definition short (2–3 sentences), plain language, middle-school reading level.
- Avoid technical or academic phrasing.
- Use visuals or bullet points to complement the text and aid communication.

### **2. Present & Future Generations**

- Balance current and future needs explicitly.

- Frame sustainability as adaptive and evolving, given uncertainty about future requirements.
- Draw on principles like “Seventh Generation” but emphasize thriving today as well.

### **3. Thriving, Well-Being, & Quality of Life**

- Go beyond “needs” to highlight thriving, health, and happiness.
- Stress positive outcomes — make the definition aspirational and hopeful, not overwhelming or defeatist.
- Ensure sustainability enhances quality of life for Arvada residents now and in the future.

### **4. Environmental Stewardship**

- Emphasize stewardship and preservation, not treating environment as a consumable product.
- Protect clean air, water, ecosystems, and natural resources.
- Favor terms like environment or natural systems over vague or greenwashy words like “planet.”
- Use concepts like “productive harmony” or “coexistence” to convey balance with nature.

### **5. Equity & Justice**

- Explicitly embed fairness, access, and inclusion in the definition.
- Ensure equity in resource distribution, opportunities, and outcomes.
- Acknowledge systemic inequities (economic, institutional, cultural) that sustainability must address.
- Highlight community care and abundance — safety, fairness, and looking out for one another.

### **6. Economic Sustainability**

- Translate “profit” into terms relevant to cities: prosperity, resilience, fiscal responsibility.
- Stress that strong local economies and green jobs are part of sustainability.
- Frame economy as a means to support thriving communities, not an end goal.

### **7. Systems Thinking & Interconnections**

- Show how environment, economy, and society are interconnected and interdependent.
- Highlight intersectionality: sustainability touches health, housing, equity, safety, and more.
- Keep scope broad enough to show connections but grounded enough for local action.

### **8. Scale & Local Relevance**

- Adapt global frameworks (SDGs, EPA, etc.) into city-scale priorities.

- Ensure the definition feels achievable and relevant for Arvada residents.
- Recognize Arvada’s local context — resources, risks (e.g., wildfires, air quality), and opportunities.
- Highlight leadership potential, positioning Arvada as a model for other cities.

### **9. Measurability & Accountability**

- Ensure definitions support clear measurement, monitoring, and reporting.
- Avoid vague or symbolic language that can’t be tied to metrics.
- Pair the definition with measurable indicators and consistent data collection.

### **10. Adaptation & Responsibility**

- Emphasize making thoughtful, responsible choices today.
- Recognize current and future challenges (climate change, resource constraints, population growth).
- Frame sustainability as proactive, resilient, and forward-looking.

### **11. Communication & Engagement**

- Use frameworks like TBL or SDGs as supporting visuals, not the definition itself.
- Pair the definition with graphics that highlight local priorities (air quality, safety, wildfires, etc.).
- Keep messaging simple and accessible for public engagement, with detailed context for staff/policy audiences.

### **12. Ethical & Cultural Grounding**

- Integrate Indigenous perspectives where appropriate (e.g., Seventh Generation, interdependency).
- Frame sustainability as ethical as well as technical — about values, justice, and care for future communities.
- Move away from extractive or purely economic framings.

## **Sample definitions based on ASAC feedback**

### **Definition A – Balanced Stewardship**

Sustainability in Arvada means meeting today’s needs while ensuring future generations can also thrive. It is about living in productive harmony with our environment, supporting a resilient local economy, and ensuring equity and well-being for all people. By making responsible choices now, we preserve clean air, water, and natural systems, strengthen our community, and secure long-term prosperity.

### **Definition B – Equity & Well-Being Focused**

For Arvada, sustainability is creating the conditions for all people to live healthy, fulfilling lives — now and in the future — in balance with the natural systems that support us. It

emphasizes equity, stewardship of shared resources, and resilience across our environment, economy, and community. Sustainability is about thriving, not just surviving, and building a city where quality of life is protected for generations.

**Definition C – Local, Practical & Measurable**

In Arvada, sustainability is our commitment to care for the environment, foster equity, and build resilience so that both current and future residents can thrive. It means protecting natural resources like air, water, and land, while supporting a fair and strong local economy. Sustainability guides our decisions at the city scale, ensuring progress is practical, balanced, and measurable — improving quality of life today while securing opportunity for tomorrow.