

CITY OF MIDDLETON SUSTAINABLE PURCHASING POLICY

1. Purpose

The City of Middleton recognizes its responsibility to minimize negative impacts on human health and the environment while supporting a diverse, equitable, and vibrant community and economy. The City also understands that the types of products and services it buys have inherent social, human health, environmental, and economic impacts. For these reasons, the Common Council desires that procurement decisions align with the City's vision for sustainability: "We meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs."¹

This Sustainable Purchasing Policy is intended to:

- Communicate the City's commitment to sustainable purchasing to its employees, vendors, and the community;
- Complement and advance implementation of the City's sustainability goals;
- Guide Policy implementation; and
- Empower employees to innovate and demonstrate leadership by making procurement decisions that help Middleton achieve the sustainability benefits articulated in this Policy.

2. Policy

2.1 General Policy

City employees will procure products and services in a manner that protects human health and the environment, is fiscally responsible, and promotes social equity, historically disadvantaged business opportunities, and other economic benefits to the community. This Policy applies to all City departments and employees, vendors, contractors, and grantees for all products and services provided to the City.

While it is desirable to have all purchasing decisions live up to Middleton's sustainability vision, the highest priority is adhering to this Policy when procuring products with a high impact and/or high cost, whether cumulatively or per unit.

2.2 Sustainability Benefits

City employees will consider the following sustainability benefits when making procurement decisions, writing specifications, and evaluating bids.

A. Environmental and health benefits

- Achieving the City's goal of obtaining 100% of its electric needs for City operations from renewable sources by 2035;
- Lowering greenhouse gas emissions associated with a product's manufacture, transportation, and use consistent with the renewable energy policy (i.e., 100% renewable energy for all City operations by 2040);

¹City of Middleton Comprehensive Plan 2021, p. 4. This Policy also advances the core principle of "Sustainability & Resiliency" stated in the City's 2022 Strategic Plan: "The City of Middleton uses proactive strategies and practices to meet emerging future needs across all sectors of the community and endure future disruptions to our climate, ecological, and social systems."

- Reducing waste generation by choosing products that are reusable, recyclable, compostable, or made with recycled content; and
- Minimizing pollutant releases to air and water, including indoor air emissions.

B. Social equity benefits:

- Purchasing goods and services from businesses located within Middleton, Dane County, or the State of Wisconsin;
- Purchasing goods and services from historically disadvantaged businesses (e.g., certified minority- and woman-owned, disabled, veteran-owned businesses).
- Purchasing goods and services from certified B Corps, worker-owned cooperatives, non-profit organizations, and certified “green” businesses when possible; and
- Purchasing goods and services that are certified “fair trade,” sweatshop-free, and produced without child labor.

C. Fiscal benefits:

- Achieving the best value for the City by evaluating products and services based on the total life-cycle costs or total costs of ownership;
- Reducing consumption; choosing reusable products; extending useful life to the extent practical; and, when acceptable sustainable options aren’t available, evaluating the benefits of leasing or renting in the short term instead of buying; and
- Reducing impacts on staff time by lowering maintenance costs.

While not all factors will be incorporated into every purchase, **it is the intent of this Policy that City employees will make a good-faith effort to incorporate sustainability factors to the maximum extent feasible.** At the discretion of the City Administrator, formal solicitations may be required to offer a discount or additional points to bidders that offer sustainable goods and services, deliver goods or services using sustainable practices, or demonstrate their commitment to sustainability by implementing their own sustainability plans.

2.3 Supporting Other Related Local, State, and Federal Policies

It is the intent of this Policy to support and complement all relevant City laws, regulations, resolutions, and plans, including existing Purchasing Policy Guidelines and the City’s Comprehensive Plan, Strategic Plan, and Sustainable City Plan. This Policy also intends to support and complement applicable state and federal laws and regulations.

2.4 Exemptions

Nothing in this Policy shall be construed as requiring a City employee or contractor to procure goods or services that do not perform adequately for their intended use, exclude adequate competition, are not available at a reasonable price in a reasonable time period, or are unreasonably priced or of demonstrably inferior quality. Furthermore, no part of this Policy shall be construed to require the City to conduct its purchasing or procurement activities in a manner that conflicts with local, state, or federal ordinances or laws.

3. Implementation

3.1 General

To ensure that the goals and priorities of this Sustainable Purchasing Policy are met and progress is reported, the Common Council will need to make sufficient staffing, funding, and material resources available. The City will support employee engagement and training, professional services, product and service pilot tests, and the development of best practices, educational materials, and/or tracking tools.

3.2 Implementation Plan

The Sustainability Committee will work with City staff to develop, for the Common Council's approval, a highly user-friendly, succinct implementation plan for City employees to follow in carrying out this Policy.

3.3 Reporting

Although the City's decentralized purchasing process limits the ability to track data regarding procurement across all departments, the City Administrator or their designee will gather information from Department Heads to provide annual qualitative reports to the Common Council on the City's progress in complying with this Policy along with any difficulties encountered.

3.4 Responsibilities

A. The City Administrator or their designee(s) shall be responsible for ensuring that:

- All employees with purchasing authority are trained on this Policy and the implementation plan;
- The expectation of sustainable purchasing is referenced in employee job descriptions, performance evaluations, and new employee manuals; and
- The City explores opportunities for reducing costs and facilitating tracking by centralizing some or all of the City's purchasing functions, leveraging buying power by aggregating demand within City government, and/or participating in cooperative purchasing.

B. City Department Directors shall be responsible for:

- Creating awareness of this Policy and the implementation plan within their departments;
- Including sustainable purchasing goals, priorities, and progress in annual budget narratives;
- Ensuring internal Departmental policies and procedures reference this Policy and the implementation plan; and
- Ensuring that specifications and other bid solicitation documents written by or for their Departments comply with this Policy to the maximum extent feasible.

3.5 Maintenance

When approving this Policy, the Common Council acknowledges that product options, costs, and market penetration of environmentally preferable products will evolve over time. To ensure the relevance and continuing value of this Policy, at least biennially, the Sustainability Committee will work with the City Administrator and Department Heads to review this Policy and the implementation plan and recommend any needed updates to the Common Council.