## What did the TSSC just complete?

The Transportation Environmental Resource Council (TERC) Sustainability Subcommittee (TSSC) was tasked with developing a common language and framework within the realm of sustainability statewide. In order to assist with achieving this goal a consultant team (Felsburg Holt & Ullevig, Good Company, and CH2MHill) assisted with preparation for and facilitation of five (5) workshops between September 2010 and April 2011. This recommendation memo has been prepared on behalf of the TSSC to communicate the success of these workshops to the TERC and to make recommendations of future next steps.

Agency members from the TSSC attended the structured, sequential series of workshops which focused on refining and advancing existing sustainability principles into a meaningful framework. The topics of the workshops were as follows:

- Workshop #1 – Moving from Principles to Guiding Framework
- Workshop #2 – Developing Performance Measures for Sustainability
- Workshop #3 – Evaluating and Planning for Sustainability in Projects
- Workshop #4 – Resolving Conflicts and Constructing Partnerships
- Workshop #5 – Building the Centralized Resource

During the workshops the TSSC agreed to a common language and framework that included three Key Topic areas: community well-being, environmental stewardship, and economic vitality and quality. A hierarchy of terms was agreed to beneath the Key Topic areas:

Key Topic – primary tenant of sustainability
→ Category – division or subset of a key topic
→ Aspect – feature of a category
→ Target – goal of each aspect
→ Strategy – planned action to achieve target
→ Measure – means of determining progress toward the target
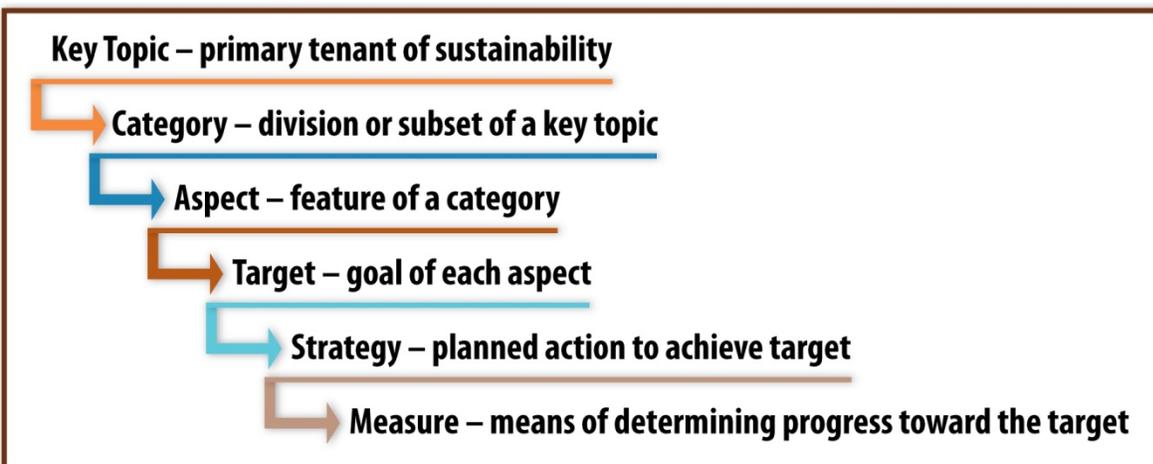
This common terminology and language allows for seamless sustainability conversations between agencies.

What were the benefits of the workshops?

The TSSC agreed that the workshop series was a success for several reasons:

1. It resulted in a common language and framework structure for agencies to use in streamlining and enhancing statewide sustainability work thus providing a more effective mechanism for agencies to collaborate on and achieve success with sustainability goals and objectives.

2. The series advanced individual agencies' efforts to become more effective, efficient, and elegant in their sustainability programs benefitting both internal and external agency sustainability functions.

3. The series set the foundation for the TERC to achieve success in sustainability by providing tools to facilitate the development of setting achievable goals and priorities, determining strategic agency teaming partners, measuring and monitoring progress, and prioritizing initiatives to best use limited funds.

What are the products of the workshops?

The five workshops included the development and dissemination of eight tools to assist agencies with integrating sustainability into their policies and projects. How and when an agency uses each tool will depend on their particular sustainability objectives and the extent of their current sustainability program. These tools are discussed in the table on the following page.
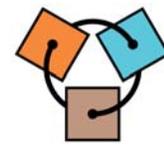
Tools Developed for the TSSC Workshops

Tool	Value of Tool
1. **Program Inventory and Planning Worksheet**	Inventory the programs, assets, and activities that are currently occurring within the agency in order to develop a baseline for comparing future sustainability activities.
2. **Handbook to Develop Sustainability Measures**	A 30-page handbook to understand how to effectively measure sustainability and to understand how to rigorously manage sustainability performance. Practice tables were provided to measure existing efforts.
3. **Sustainability Evaluation Tool Worksheet**	Spreadsheets to evaluate projects and initiatives at a high level or to a very detailed, quantitative level. Provides information on life-cycle analysis.
4. **Tool to Determine Topics – Categories – Aspects**	This spreadsheet helps establish short- and long-term internal and external goals, as well as responsible parties, performance measures, and data sources.
5. **Decision Flow Chart**	This flow chart provides a path for decision-making when conflict is encountered within a project or program which may occur between sustainability measures/strategies and between agencies.
6. **Mitigation Screening Tool**	If conflict is encountered within a project or program this matrix allows for screening various sustainability strategies to ultimately determine which strategy is preferred.
7. **Identifying Key Partners**	This worksheet guides the process of determining the key partners that should be invited into the project process.
8. **Strategy Plan**	After sustainability strategies have been identified, this plan can be utilized to break down those strategies into smaller components (e.g. contracting, technologies, risk).

Next Steps for the TSSC

The workshop series culminated with workshop #5 during which an in-depth discussion occurred about the future direction and next steps of the TSSC. It was decided that a centralized resource would be useful for maintaining the forward progression of sustainability throughout the state. Considerable discussion was devoted to defining the centralized resource, what format it would take, what it would provide, and needed implementation actions. These things are described below.

Building the Centralized Resource

The centralized resource could occur in a number of formats such as:

- Website
- Social media
- Database
- SharePoint (or equal)
- Meeting format
- Professional Organization
- List-serv

Given that some of these formats could be costly and require a fair amount of maintenance, the TSSC selected several short-term formats to implement:

- Continued meetings of TSSC members after completion of workshops
- Posting of the eight workshop tools on the CDOT TERC Sustainability Subcommittee webpage

Within the formats listed above the centralized resource would provide:

- Tools (static and active) – such as the eight tools developed during the TSSC workshops.
- File sharing expert forum – a place to share sustainability files and receive input from other agency sustainability experts.
- Sustainability announcements – a posting of events, seminars, workshops etc. related to sustainability that agency members could attend.
- Research and development – since information is always changing, agencies can see what research is on-going and has occurred within other agencies to learn and reduce redundant efforts.
- Peer agency contacts – an up to date address book of current sustainability contact staff members.
- Opportunities – lists projects that contain sustainability opportunities.
- Project examples – where sustainability elements have been implemented and where lessons learned from these projects can be viewed from other agencies.
- Funding sources – grant opportunities and other funding sources for sustainability.

Needed Implementation Actions by TSSC

During workshop #5, the TSSC identified several immediate and continuing actions to be taken in order to develop the centralized resource and to continue the momentum and energy from the workshops. These actions are listed below.

Immediate Actions

The immediate actions were identified as actions that can be done in the immediate future and do not require an extensive amount of staff effort or funding.

- Make formal presentation at the October 2011 TERC meeting summarizing accomplishments and achievements from the workshop series, and defining TSSC recommendations
- Form a small group of TSSC members to present information to the Governor's Energy Office

Continuing Actions

The continuing actions were identified as actions that require an allocation of staff time and effort and some minimal funding.

- Research national organizations similar to the TERC and see how they have organized their efforts to achieve sustainability success
- Narrow the format options for the centralized resource to clearly identify funding needs and agency requirements
- Investigate funding mechanisms for the centralized resource

Final Recommendations to the TERC

During the workshop series the TSSC achieved their goal of taking initial sustainability topics and developing them into a common language and defined framework. Building on the efforts and success of the initial workshops the TSSC has achieved success and has defined steps for future success, such as developing the centralized resource. In order to implement the centralized resource the TSSC makes the following recommendations to the TERC:

1. Support the TSSC's continued activities for a longer-term in order to promote continued sustainability collaboration

2. Assist with identifying appropriate key agency(ies) to fiscally sponsor and/or promote the long-term efforts of the TSSC

3. Provide direction and funds to develop an implementation plan for the centralized resource