

# Town of Mount Airy Sustainable Procurement Policy

## 1. Purpose

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The Town of Mount Airy recognizes its responsibility to minimize negative impacts on the environment. The Town acknowledges that the types of products and services the Town buys have inherent environmental and economic impacts, and that the Town should make procurement decisions that embody the Town's commitment to sustainability.

This Sustainable Procurement Policy is intended to:

- Identify those sustainability factors that shall be incorporated into procurement decisions;
- Provide implementation guidance;
- Communicate the Town's commitment to sustainable procurement.

## 2. Policy

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### 2.1 General Policy Statement

Town will make best efforts to procure materials, products or services in a manner that integrates fiscal responsibility, community and environmental stewardship.

### 2.2 Sustainability Factors

Town will make best efforts to incorporate the following factors when writing specifications for, or procuring, materials, products, or services.

Environmental factors to be considered include, but are not limited to, the life cycle assessment of:

- Pollutant releases
- Toxicity, especially the use of persistent, bioaccumulative, and toxic (PBT) chemicals
- Waste generation
- Greenhouse gas emissions
- Energy consumption
- Depletion of natural resources
- Impacts on biodiversity

Fiscal Factors to be considered include, but are not limited to:

- Use reduction; buy only what you really need
- Product performance and quality
- Life-cycle cost assessment; lowest total cost
- Leveraging buying power
- Impact on staff time and labor
- Long-term financial/market changes

While not all factors will be incorporated into every purchase, it is the intent of this policy that Town will make a good faith effort to incorporate and balance these factors to the maximum extent possible.

### 2.3 Use of Best Practices

Town will utilize best practices in sustainable procurement as they evolve.

### 2.4 Toxics in Products and Services

Town will utilize the framework of the Precautionary Principle as a guide when evaluating the comparative toxicity of products and services.

### 2.5 Use of Environmental Product or Service Labels

The Town staff are encouraged to use independent, third-party social and/or environmental (eco)

product or service label standards when writing specifications for, or procuring materials, products, or services, so long as such labels:

- Were developed and awarded by an impartial third-party;
- Were developed in a public, transparent, and broad stakeholder process; and
- Represent specific and meaningful leadership criteria for that product or service category.

In addition, whenever possible, label standards used in product or service specifications should represent standards that take into account multiple attributes and life-cycle considerations, with claims verified by an independent third-party.

## **2.6 Town Code and State Law**

It is the intent of this policy to complement Town code and State laws.

## **3. Implementation and Responsibilities**

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### **3.1 Product and Service Standards**

The Green Team Committee shall be responsible for:

- Ensuring Town staff utilize product and service standards and best practices that comply with this policy. Examples include, but are not limited to, standards for minimum recycled content, energy efficiency, and prohibited toxic ingredients;
- Ensuring that when the need for developing a Town standard in sustainable procurement arises, staff will participate and collaborate with other applicable staff so as to harmonize and continuously improve standards throughout the Town; and
- Ensuring internal policies and procedures reference this policy and incorporate the use of sustainable products and services that meet the intent of this policy.

### **3.2 Education**

The Green Team Committee shall be responsible for:

- Building awareness of this policy through information dissemination and incorporation into routine employee trainings;
- Encouraging the use of environmentally preferable/sustainable products and services through information dissemination, development of internal procedures, pilot testing, and leading by example.
- Developing employee sustainable procurement resources such as, but not limited to, standards, specifications, tools, and best practices; and
- Developing inter-office communication among staff about sustainable procurement best practices

### **3.4 Data Collection and Performance Reporting**

The Green Team Committee shall be responsible for:

- Gathering information for the purposes of tracking, reporting, and evaluating the Town's sustainable procurement activities and evaluating the effectiveness of this policy
- Incorporating a progress report on sustainable procurement activities and the effectiveness of this policy into the Town's annual report.

### **3.5 Resources**

The Green Team Committee shall commit to providing the appropriate dedicated staff and related funding to support the implementation and coordination of this policy. This includes activities such as, but not limited to, employee training and resources, professional services, product/service pilot tests, and educational materials.

### **3.6 Policy Review**

The Green Team Committee shall be responsible for periodically bringing together internal stakeholders to review this policy for updates or to otherwise determine whether this policy is in alignment with other Town sustainability efforts and policies. The policy review shall be completed at least every year, but may be done on a more frequent basis as needed.

## APPENDIX A: DEFINITIONS

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“Biodiversity”: the total diversity of all organisms and ecosystems at various spatial scales (genes, populations, species, ecosystems, and biomes). Biodiversity is often used as a measure of the health of biological systems.

“Environmentally Preferable”: products or services that have a lesser or reduced effect on human health and the environment when compared with competing products or services that serve the same purpose. This comparison may consider raw materials acquisition, production, manufacturing, packaging, distribution, reuse, operation, maintenance, or disposal of the product or service.

“Persistent, Bioaccumulative, and Toxic (PBT) Chemicals”: chemicals that are toxic, persist in the environment, and bioaccumulate in food chains.

“Precautionary Principle”: a framework that guides decision makers to take anticipatory and protective measures when an activity raises threats of harm to human health or the environment, even if some cause and effect relationships are not fully established scientifically.

“Sustainable Procurement”: purchasing materials, products, and services in a manner that integrates fiscal responsibility, social equity, and community and environmental stewardship.

“Toxicity”: the quality, relative degree, or specific degree of being toxic or poisonous.