

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

Member Issues

APTA members need assistance with best practices for greening the industry and building the industry's green credibility.

APTA GOAL → Establish services for APTA members that help environmental sustainability become integral to how the public transportation industry functions and what it provides to meet the needs of public transportation customers.

“Transit organizations themselves are ‘green leaders’ and are respected within their communities.”

TransitVision 2050

APTA Objectives and Action Plan

1. **Support members’ efforts to green their own operations and to promote more walkable and sustainable development.**

A. Knowledge Base

- 1) Establish a definition of environmental sustainability in the public transportation industry for use by the APTA membership.
- 2) Develop and maintain information on energy efficiency and conservation practices being used throughout the industry, by continuously updating success stories/lessons learned.
- 3) Expand industry awareness of how to integrate transportation and land-use planning; promote transit-supportive land use and its environmental and social benefits.
- 4) Define and promote what types of green jobs exist for the transit industry.
- 5) Raise public and private sector members’ awareness of how sustainability goals support each other.

B. Operations

- 1) Educate the APTA membership on the benefits of investing in greening their organizations.
- 2) Develop tools for lifecycle cost evaluation and help members make the business case for sustainability.
- 3) Secure dedicated funding for alternative-fuel vehicles and green facilities through climate change and authorization legislation that encourages private sector investment in new and emerging green technologies.
- 4) Promote studies that address ways to become greener through specific practices and vehicle technologies.

- 5) Identify the benefits and responsibilities of a chief sustainability officer or similar position in organizations. Continue to implement procedures at APTA conferences to reflect green practices—e.g. online programs, recyclable badges, and the elimination of plastic conference bags.

C. Outreach

- 1) Evaluate and continuously redesign the Sustainability Workshop to help members become as green as possible.
- 2) Continue to conduct a transit-oriented energy efficiency and conservation product and services segment at the APTA EXPO.
- 3) Bring the issue of sustainability into smaller APTA workshops (e.g., marketing, legal affairs, university transport).
- 4) Continue to publish stories on environmental sustainability issues.
- 5) Expand media outreach on transit’s environmental friendliness and sustainability qualities.

D. Incentives and recognition

- 1) Increase the number of signatories to APTA’s Sustainability Commitment.
- 2) Use the Sustainability Commitment to document the progress public transportation agencies and businesses are making on sustainability.

2. Develop a high level of public and policymaker awareness of public transportation as a key solution to climate change, energy efficiency and independence, and environmental improvement.

A. Messages

- 1) Continue to illustrate how public transportation is a catalyst for sustainable development and livable communities and the positive link between transit and land use in building livable communities.

“There needs to be a stronger linkage between public transit and national energy security and climate change policies.”

APTA Member

- 2) Increase public awareness of the environmental benefits of public transportation.
- 3) Position public transportation to receive substantial proceeds from carbon pricing revenues, continuing to develop

methodologies for quantifying avoided emissions and working with the The Climate Registry, governments, and other organizations to get avoided emissions included as accepted protocol in emissions reporting for transit agencies.

- 4) Work in concert with other organizations to develop a consistent message on sustainability and transportation.

B. Activities

- 1) Increase coverage on blogs, social networking media, and national media outlets promoting public transportation's environmental benefits.
- 2) Continue to exhibit at conferences focused on environmental issues.
- 3) Increase participation in National Dump the Pump Day and Earth Day activities.

3. Develop new relationships with non-DOT agencies and new partnerships with non-traditional industry groups, to gain expertise and support for public transportation as an essential element of sustainability.

A. Stakeholder Awareness

- 1) Develop stronger relationships with the U.S. Department of Energy, university research centers, state and local energy advocacy groups, and other relevant entities to enhance expertise on greening the industry and positioning the industry as green.
- 2) Work with both the public sector (e.g., EPA) and private sector (e.g., the energy sector) to guide research and to access funding for energy efficiency improvements in transit operations.

B. Member Awareness

- 1) Raise awareness among APTA members of successful greening practices from outside the industry, bringing in more speakers on sustainability and holding new technology and problem-solving talks at APTA events.
- 2) Develop partnerships with appropriate environmental organizations to help APTA members become greener.
- 3) Support efforts by public transportation agencies to build partnerships with municipalities, Metropolitan Planning Organizations, and regional and state agencies that are pursuing sustainable development initiatives.

Measures of Success

- One-third of APTA members have signed APTA’s Sustainability Commitment, one-half of them are committed to the silver level or higher.
- New funding, programmatic, or technical resources have been obtained from non-DOT sources.
- There is a significant rise in the number of LEED-certified facilities built or operated by APTA members.
- There is a significant increase in the number of positive links made between public transportation and environmental issues by legislators and in the media.
- LEED-Neighborhood Development includes significant joint development projects.
- A majority of APTA members have created a sustainability position at the executive level, such as a chief sustainability officer.
- Widespread operational efficiencies from implementing environmental improvements are tracked among the APTA membership.