

# Sustainable Highlands Decision Making Framework

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An Integrated Community Sustainability Plan is the community's highest level policy and guides decision-making at all levels. Ultimately, the vision articulated in the ICSP is implemented through daily decision-making. Below is a worksheet that outlines four strategic questions to help assess any type of action, (plan, policy, project, research, procurement, practice new or old) by using the **Sustainable Highlands** sustainability framework to inform decision-making. For a more comprehensive and user-friendly version of this tool, visit the [Sustainable Highlands](#) web page.

**NAME OF PROPOSED ACTION:** \_\_\_\_\_

**BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE ACTION:** \_\_\_\_\_

**DATE:** \_\_\_\_\_

**REVIEWED BY:** \_\_\_\_\_

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## 1 **DOES THE ACTION MOVE HIGHLANDS TOWARDS OUR SHARED VISION OF SUCCESS?**

Indicate the top **Sustainable Highlands** Strategy Areas that the action supports:

- |                               |                                |                            |
|-------------------------------|--------------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1. Buildings and Sites        | 2. Economy and Work            | 3. Education and Leisure   |
| 4. Energy                     | 5. Food                        | 6. Healthy Community       |
| 7. Land Use and Natural Areas | 8. Transportation and Mobility | 9. Water and Waste Systems |

Which main **Descriptions of Success** would the action move us **toward**?

1.

2.

3.

Are there any Descriptions of Success that the action may move us **away from**?

1.

2.

3.

How could we **maximize** the positive impacts of the action?

1.

2.

3.

How could we avoid or **minimize** these potential negative impacts of the action?

1.

2.

3.

**2 DOES THE ACTION MOVE HIGHLANDS TOWARD OUR SHARED SUSTAINABILITY OBJECTIVES?**

To reduce and to eventually eliminate Highlands' contribution to:



Ongoing build-up of **substances (scarce metals, fossil fuels) taken from the earth's crust.**



Ongoing build-up of **toxic substances produced by society.**



Ongoing **degradation of natural systems by physical means.**



**Undermining the ability of people to meet their human needs.**

	Toward Quickly	Toward Slowly	Neutral	Away	If 'away,' how could you avoid or minimize this?

**3 DOES THE ACTION PRESENT A FLEXIBLE PLATFORM FOR FURTHER MOVEMENT TOWARDS A SUSTAINABLE HIGHLANDS?**

Eventually the Highlands will need to **eliminate** the contribution to the four unsustainable practices above. In general, choosing actions that are as flexible as possible will help you avoid dead end situations that might prevent you from reconciling short term tradeoffs and fully meeting your sustainability objectives. If technical or economic conditions change in the future, investments in flexible solutions will help ensure that these changes do not bring overly punitive costs and do not limit our ability to adapt.

Use the space to the right to indicate how your action incorporates long-term flexibility.

The action incorporates long-term flexibility by:

**4 DOES THE ACTION PRESENT A GOOD FINANCIAL INVESTMENT?**

	Capital: \$		Operating: \$/year	
What is the approximate cost of the action?				
Does this action reduce long term operating costs/ have a strong return on investment?		Yes		No
If so, what is the approximate associated pay-back period for the investment?	Years:			
Have non-market costs been considered in your decision making?		Yes		No
Are there financial costs to other stakeholders or citizens from the implementation of this action?		Yes		No

**Given your assessment of the benefits, challenges and long-term costs associated with this action, what is your level of comfort with moving forward?**

	Strongly support this action
	Support in principle, but support will depend on how the action is executed
	On the right track, but more information and/or substantial changes are required. Currently, not comfortable supporting this action.
	The action as proposed is not supportable.