



SUSTAINABLE STEPS

Brought to you by Arielle Gerstein
Sustainability Coordinator

Through Sustainable Steps, I will highlight a monthly topic in sustainability. My goal is to provide sustainability-focused content to Charleston County staff. These topics will include tips you can use at home or work and sustainability projects in and around the County.

Sustainability Perspectives Report

I began my role as Sustainability Coordinator on October 15, 2021. New to the County and to Charleston, I made it my mission to understand the perspectives of Deputy Administrators, department heads and staff on sustainability. I envision sustainability at the County as a drive of initiatives set by County Council and County leadership.

Starting in November 2021, I held 26 meetings with County leaders through mostly one-on-one conversations to gain their perspectives on sustainability. Following these conversations, in January I hosted two virtual Meet & Greets. I invited all County employees to participate in these meetings and share their perspectives because I believe sustainability affects every employee.

Main takeaways from the conversations:

- Managers and leaders at the County understand what sustainability is and why it's important

- Conversations were generally focused both on individual actions (i.e., recycling, turning off lights) and larger-scale changes (i.e., buildings, cars, roads).
- County management and leadership is open to incorporating sustainable practices into their departments.
- Consensus that changes should be made at the County first to show best practices before engaging with residents more broadly.
- Education is key to continue to engage County management, leadership, and staff in sustainability.

As I build out the County Sustainability Program, I will continue to ask for input from County management, leadership, and staff and seek the approval of Council. Be on the lookout for more staff engagement through the new Green Liaisons program!

If you have a **Sustainable Steps** idea, send it to Arielle at AGerstein@charlestoncounty.org.