Sustainable Fleet – Standard Operating Procedure

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1.0 Purpose

Buncombe County's Board of Commissioners passed the County's Strategic Plan with a carbon reduction goal to reduce greenhouse gas emissions (GHG) both internally and for the community. Vehicle fleet fossil fuel consumption contributes to a significant portion of the County's internal greenhouse gas emissions. This document outlines the procedures for evaluating and maintaining sustainable fleet for the County.

2.0 Specific Procedures

i. **Purchase and Replacement Evaluation**

To ensure vehicle purchases align with the County's carbon reduction goals, Fleet Management and the Vehicle Evaluation Team will evaluate all new and replacement vehicle purchases. As part of the evaluation process, staff will utilize the following Vehicle Replacement Tier (VRT) Structure.

- Tier I – Zero emission vehicle
- Tier II – Alternative fueled internal combustion engine
- Tier III – Hybrid internal combustion engine
- Tier IV – Conventional internal combustion engine – Gasoline
- Tier V – Conventional internal combustion engine – Diesel

When a need arises for a new or replacement vehicle, the following steps should be followed to ensure timely and accurate processing.

a. Department submits a vehicle request per the Capital Improvement Policy procedures, making sure to include vehicle type, intended use and business need
b. Fleet Management and the Vehicle Evaluation Team evaluates the request and assigns the highest VRT based on available vehicle technologies and fueling/ charging infrastructure as well as identification of the specific vehicle make and model that best supports fleet standardization
c. Fleet Management staff notifies Department of the evaluation via email

ii. **Appeals Process**

If a department disagrees with the assigned tier for their new or replacement vehicle request, they may submit an appeal utilizing the Vehicle Request Appeal Form within 10 business days

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of receiving an assigned tier. The appeal should be completed by the Department Director. The following steps should be followed to ensure an appeal is handled accordingly.

a. Within 10 business days of receiving an assigned Vehicle Replacement Tier, Department Director should complete the Vehicle Request Appeals form with a detailed business case that explains why they disagree with the assigned tier or telematics device. The appeal will be reviewed by Fleet Management, the Vehicle Evaluation Team, and the County Manager's Office as soon as possible upon submittal
b. Once the review is complete, Fleet Management will notify the appealing department of the final decision via email

iii. Driver Education: Fleet Management and the Sustainability Office will offer sustainability training for County fleet operators aimed at reducing GHG emissions from the fleet. Topics to be included in the training:

a. Fuel-efficient driving behaviors and idling minimization
b. Route optimization
c. Electric vehicle training (safety, unique features, range, charging procedures)

3.0 References

i. Sustainable Fleet Policy
ii. Capital Improvement Policy

4.0 Definitions

i. *Greenhouse Gas* – A gas that absorbs and emits radiant energy within the thermal infrared range and which causes increased global temperatures resulting in severely negative environmental impacts.
ii. *Telematics* – In-Vehicle technology that transmits real-time data on location, performance, and driver behavior to inform fleet management decisions