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Advocating for Sustainability at The City of Beaverton, Oregon: An Advocacy Initiative and Sustainability Strategy using the STAR Communities (Sustainability Tools for Assessing and Rating Communities) Framework and Rating System

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Capstone Abstract

This paper analyzes the policy and advocacy dimensions of an effort that secured approval from the mayor and city council of Beaverton, Oregon for an ambitious addition to its sustainability initiatives. As a result, Beaverton has now applied for STAR (Sustainability Tools for Assessing and Rating Communities) certification – a national program that uses the STAR Rating System, that includes hundreds of measurable indicators to assess a community's environmental, economic and social sustainability. In addition, the paper analyzes the process by which STAR indicator data were collected and are being incorporated into a comprehensive planning document – the Sustainable Beaverton Community Strategy (SBCS).

The author was a member of the city's Sustainability Program that developed and carried out an internal advocacy strategy to secure approval for the STAR initiative, has been the lead staff member for collecting and compiling the data for each STAR indicator included in the city's report, and wrote the draft of the SBCS document. Drawing on those experiences and concepts from the field of policy advocacy, the paper evaluates the outcomes of these efforts and identifies key lessons.

