

# The Zelyx Sports Sustainability Framework

*What a well-governed sustainability program looks like — and what it takes to build one*

Most professional sports organizations have sustainability activity. Very few have a sustainability program. The difference is not intention — it is infrastructure. A program has governance, policy, accountability, data, and reporting structures that make sustainability a permanent organizational function. Activity is what happens without those structures.

Most organizations have committed to more sustainable operations, measure emissions, and publish annual reports. However, it is not clearly defined how to build the organizational infrastructure to deliver on those commitments. That gap is where most organizations are living right now.

## The Framework: What Makes It Work

A sustainability program is only as strong as the organizational infrastructure behind it. These are the components that every well-governed sustainability program requires — regardless of league, venue type, or organizational size.

Component	What It Does
<b>Governance</b>	Defines who owns the program, who is accountable at each level, and how sustainability connects to executive leadership and ownership. Governance is what makes the program survivable beyond any single person.
<b>Policy</b>	Translates organizational commitment into operational instruction — the rules the organization runs by across procurement, operations, events, and community engagement. Without policy, sustainability depends on individual judgment call by call.
<b>Procedures</b>	Defines how each policy requirement is met in practice — step by step, role by role. Procedures are what separate a program that runs consistently from one that depends on heroics.
<b>Data Governance</b>	Establishes who owns each data stream, how it is collected and validated, what systems manage it, and how it is retained for regulatory and investor review. No data governance means no defensible claims.
<b>Metrics Architecture</b>	Defines what good looks like — the standards the organization is working toward — benchmarked against a baseline, connected across pillars, and structured to flag deterioration in real time, not just report what happened last year.
<b>Reporting</b>	Turns internal performance into organizational accountability — to leadership, to the league, to the municipality, to the community, and to capital markets. Reporting is what makes the program visible and verifiable.
<b>Risk Management Integration</b>	Connects sustainability exposures — regulatory penalties, community displacement, climate physical risk — to the organization's enterprise risk register, capital budget, and insurance strategy. Sustainability risk is financial risk.

## The Scope: What the Framework Governs

Each of the six sustainability pillars runs through the organizational framework above. Every pillar has its own governance accountability, its own policies and procedures, its own data streams, its own metrics, and its own reporting requirements. A gap in any one pillar creates exposure across the organization.

Pillar	Operational Scope
<b>Energy &amp; Carbon</b>	Emissions measurement, reduction targets, renewable energy strategy, decarbonization roadmap, regulatory compliance calendar.
<b>Waste Management</b>	Diversion rate targets, composting and recycling operations, vendor management, zero-waste event protocols, data tracking.
<b>Water</b>	Consumption benchmarking, efficiency standards, field irrigation management, stormwater systems.
<b>Procurement &amp; Supply Chain</b>	Vendor sustainability standards, sustainable sourcing, single-use plastic reduction, fan-facing engagement.
<b>Regulatory &amp; Compliance</b>	Building performance standard monitoring, compliance calendar management, penalty exposure modeling, reporting obligations.
<b>Community Engagement</b>	Local hire, food donation, displacement monitoring, community benefit agreements, workforce pipeline management.

### RISK MANAGEMENT INTEGRATION — WHY IT MATTERS MOST

Sustainability risk is financial risk. Building performance standard penalties are operating expenses. Reputational damage from community displacement affects ticket sales, sponsorships, and public subsidies. Climate physical risk affects venue infrastructure and insurance. These exposures belong in the organization's enterprise risk register — not housed separately in a sustainability department where they are invisible to the CFO and ownership group.

A mature sustainability program is integrated into capital budgeting, real estate decision-making, and insurance strategy. The organizations that make this integration are the ones positioned when the regulatory and capital market environment shifts — which it already is.

#### WHAT THIS OVERVIEW DOESN'T DO

*This document describes the architecture. Building it for your organization — calibrated to your league, your venue type, your regulatory market, and your community context — is the work Zelyx does.*

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