

CITY COUNCIL AGENDA ITEM

CITY OF SHORELINE, WASHINGTON

AGENDA TITLE:	Discussion of Goal No. 6: Environmental Sustainability Strategy
DEPARTMENT:	Planning and Development Services
PRESENTED BY:	Joseph W. Tovar, FAICP, Director Juniper Nammi, Associate Planner

PROBLEM/ISSUE STATEMENT:

On July 9th, 2007 Council authorized the City Manager to execute the services contract with AHBL for development of the Environmental Sustainability Strategy for the City of Shoreline. Substantial progress has been made to date, including two community conversations for public input and draft goals, objectives, recommendations and measures of change (See Attachments A through D).

This staff report and presentation to Council are intended to update Council on this progress. Council comments on the Strategy's key components and DRAFT recommendations will be solicited. Following this Council meeting, the consultant team, together with City staff, will combine the work completed thus far with the comments and feedback from the Council and public into a *Proposed Environmental Sustainability Strategy*. The *Proposed Strategy* will then be presented at a joint Parks Board and Planning Commission meeting and then to Council for a public hearing and discussion before adoption of the Strategy (See Attachment E).

Council input at this stage in the process will ensure that the elements and recommendations included in the *Proposed Strategy* accurately reflect public input to date and Council guidance about topical focus or relative priorities. Additional public input will be solicited at the Council's Public Hearing on the Strategy scheduled for April 21, 2008.

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

There are no new budget implications at this time. The City Council approved \$100,000 in the 2007 budget to support the preparation of an Environmental Sustainability Strategy and this Strategy will be completed within the specified budget. Any potential budget implications for implementation of this Strategy, if adopted, would be decided on through the regular budgeting processes.

RECOMMENDATION

No action is required at this time. This report and presentation lay out the format and preliminary draft content for the Environmental Sustainability Strategy for Council discussion. Council comments and questions are requested at this stage in the development of the Strategy to ensure that the Strategy is on the right track. By the end of the meeting, Council should understand the work completed to date and be

comfortable with the draft elements that will become the Environmental Sustainability Strategy. Staff will take Council input into account in drafting the proposed Environmental Sustainability Strategy for review by the Council, Planning Commission, Park Board, and public in meetings over the next several months. We hope to have a Final draft ready for Council's adoption in May.

Approved By: City Manager  City Attorney ____

INTRODUCTION

The City Council adopted "Create an Environmentally Sustainable Community" as Goal 6 of the 2007-2008 Council Work Plan. Council subsequently adopted the complementary Resolution No. 242 in support of the US Conference of Mayors Climate Protection Agreement and Resolution No. 260, expressing the City's interest in being designated as a "Cascade Agenda City." Two interdepartmental City staff teams were established to work on implementation of this goal and have worked together with AHBL consultants in developing an overarching Environmental Sustainability Strategy.

The final adopted strategy will provide future guidance and support for two other City projects now underway to implement Goal 6: (1) the Urban Forestry Assessment being done by Parks and (2) the Pilot Green Street projects/program under the auspices of Public Works. In addition, the strategy will also provide clarity and priority for a variety of other City projects and activities, including capital improvement projects, fleet and facilities design and operations, land use and development regulations, and public education and information, to name a few.

BACKGROUND

Every two years the City Council adopts goals that set the direction for the City's work in the coming years. Goal 6 for 2007-2008 is to "create an *environmentally sustainable community*." Components of this goal include implementing "green" practices at all City-owned or operated facilities, requiring new development or redevelopment to achieve high standards for storm water management, energy efficiency, and reduction of solid waste, and maximizing recycling and reuse of resources.

Adoption of the Environmental Sustainability Strategy is one of the major objectives to implement this City Council Goal. The City already has a number of programs, policies and codes that contribute to environmental sustainability. However, we do not have an overarching plan that coordinates these elements, facilitates environmentally sustainable decision making, or allows us to assess regularly just how environmentally sustainable City operations are currently. Also lacking is a tool by which we can decide what actions and priorities will best contribute to creating an *environmentally sustainable community*.

On July 9th, 2007, Council authorized the City Manager to execute the services contract with AHBL for development of the Environmental Sustainability Strategy for the City of Shoreline. Since approval of the contract, City staff has worked with the AHBL consultant team to:

- Draft a mission statement and guiding principles for the strategy
- Draft indicators, a tool for evaluating sustainability in decision making, and potential recommended actions
- Conduct two community conversations:
 - October 11th - focused on the scope of the Sustainability Strategy and exploring opportunities and tools that could contribute to sustainability.
 - November 14th - focused on how to incorporate sustainability into the City's decision making, potential actions that could be recommended for implementation of the strategy, and the potential indicators the City could

track to measure progress towards creating an environmentally sustainable community.

- Research and assess existing sustainability efforts – what the City should keep doing, do better, and what else can be done.

As part of Council Goal 6, regular progress reports on the development of this Sustainability Strategy have been provided as part of the Quarterly Reports to Council. Also, the presentation materials from each Community Conversation were provided to Council members following these public meetings and copies are available online: <http://www.cityofshoreline.com/cityhall/departments/planning/sustainable/index.cfm>.

DISCUSSION

A strategy rather than a plan:

The common policy tool for municipalities to use in thinking about the future is a *plan*, which typically includes goals and policies, problem analysis, and prescriptive programs and actions to be implemented through the plan. The most prominent of plans for a city like Shoreline is the Comprehensive Plan, which is legally mandated and binding.

When considering environmental sustainability and the multi-faceted complexity of the topic, it rapidly became clear that Shoreline did not simply need another plan. The Comprehensive Plan and its supporting master plans and regulations do account for many of the elements that contribute to environmental sustainability. Amendments to the Comprehensive Plan and its implementing projects and regulations may be one way to implement a broader Sustainability Strategy. However, a comprehensive plan is largely focused on land use and capital facilities. What the City needs to truly be able to “create an environmentally sustainable community” is an even broader, more inclusive set of principles and priorities set forth as policy – in short, it needs a *strategy*.

In the case of environmental sustainability, the City has already undertaken many progressive initiatives. However, we now lack measurable targets and tools to track our progress. We have no mechanisms in place to help us determine from an array of choices (e.g., budget, regulatory, or programmatic decisions) which of the possible alternatives would be most advantageous. AHBL was hired to help us find or create the tools needed to set out a path towards sustainability, tell us how we’re doing, and what course corrections might be needed along the way.

Context for a sustainability strategy:

An Environmental Sustainability Strategy is the next step in furthering implementation of many of the goals in the City of Shoreline Comprehensive Plan. As a tool for decision making, the Strategy is not the end of the process but a beginning in how the City organization as a whole operates. The final Strategy’s decision making tools, indicators and recommendations for action will help provide a sustainability context for even our regular processes, such as Planning Commission’s role in reviewing development code changes or Parks Board review of parks plans and projects.

The advantage of the Environmental Sustainability Strategy in future decision making lies with the tools provided. Indicators that track our progress towards sustainability will

inform our decisions and a tool for weighing options will facilitate consideration of sustainability in concert with the other priorities and issues important to the City.

An Environmental Sustainability Strategy will also put projects and programs, like the Hamlin, South Woods, and Shoreview Urban Forestry Assessments, into context. Are these programs having the desired impact on the health and sustainability of our City as a whole? It provides guidance in designing programs and policies to implement the City's resolutions to support the US Conference of Mayor's Climate Protection Agreement and to support the principles of the Cascade Agenda.

The City of Shoreline is setting a new standard and paving the way for other cities of our size interested in becoming sustainable, who understand that the expensive and complex plans used by larger cities are not the right tool for their more modest counterparts. Using a *strategy* approach rather than a *plan*, the City of Shoreline is developing internal capacity for environmental decision-making with the tools to evaluate and adjust our own progress as we move forward.

Strategy development process:

Development of this Environmental Sustainability Strategy has been a comprehensive process. Work to date by the AHBL consultant team and City staff includes:

- Research of similar programs for lessons learned
- Workshop, meetings, and interviews with City staff
 - What's working and what's not?
 - Interests and concerns
- Review City codes & policy for alignment with goals
- Community Conversations - public outreach/input:
 - Guiding Principles and Focus areas
 - Draft Objectives, Targets, Indicators and Potential Recommendations

The Strategy itself has yet to be written as a comprehensive document. Based on City Council feedback tonight and additional staff review, the final recommendations and capacity assessment for implementation will be crafted and combined with the work completed to date to comprise a functionally-oriented Environmental Sustainability Strategy by mid-March.

Strategy components and draft content:

The Environmental Sustainability Strategy will include:

- Mission Statement
- Guiding Principles
 - Process
 - Specific Priorities & Focus Areas
- Criteria to evaluate existing & potential Initiatives
- Benchmarking
- Objectives-Targets-Indicators
- Recommendations
 - New Initiatives
 - Existing Initiatives
- Capacity Assessment

Examples of the draft components of the Strategy will be highlighted as part of the presentation to Council on January 22nd. More detailed information is included as attachments to this report, which contain the first two Memos from the consultant team to the City, and a couple additional draft documents that will be combined to create the Sustainability Strategy.

SUMMARY

The City of Shoreline has already adopted and plans to implement many innovative measures which will reduce waste and energy consumption, protect ecosystems and natural capital, and help to create a more sustainable community. However, there has been no coherent and comprehensive direction or decision-making process to set priorities and foster systematic change across departments. The creation of this Sustainability Strategy will allow the City to evaluate progress and set more ambitious goals. The purpose of this update is to inform Council of progress to date, and receive additional direction. The Draft Proposed Environmental Sustainability Strategy is currently scheduled to be ready for Council and public review in mid-March.

RECOMMENDATION

No action is required at this time. This report and presentation lay out the format and preliminary draft content for the Environmental Sustainability Strategy for Council discussion. Council comments and questions are requested at this stage in the development of the Strategy to ensure that the Strategy is on the right track. By the end of the meeting, Council should understand the work completed to date and be comfortable with the draft elements that will become the Environmental Sustainability Strategy. Staff will take Council input into account in drafting the proposed Environmental Sustainability Strategy for review by the Council, Planning Commission, Park Board, and public in meetings over the next several months. We hope to have a Final draft ready for Council's adoption in May.

ATTACHMENTS:

- A. Discipline Report: "Sustainability Program Elements and Profiles"
- B. Discipline Report: "Sustainability Measurement and Tracking"
- C. DRAFT Preliminary Recommendations Matrix
- D. DRAFT Capacity Assessment Methodology Example
- E. Timeline of Council Action and Public Input Opportunities