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## *draft executive summary*

A standard definition of sustainability is meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. Towards this end, a major goal of creating and implementing the Shoreline Sustainability Strategy is so future generations of local residents will have the resources and means to live at least as well as, and preferably better than, people today.

This is evident in the Mission Statement of the document, which states, "The City of Shoreline will exemplify and encourage sustainable practices in our operations and in our community by:

- Being stewards of our community's natural resources and environmental assets;
- Promoting development of a green infrastructure for the Shoreline community;
- Measurably reducing waste, energy and resource consumption, carbon emissions and the use of toxics in City operations; and
- Providing tools and leadership to empower our community to work towards sustainable goals in their businesses and households."

These aspirations will affect many overarching City policies and development regulations, the operations of every City department, the design of every Capital Improvement Program, and eventually begin to change the appearance and health of the built and natural environments. It is no small task.

Because this scope is so broad, and the universe of "sustainability" so vast, the City opted to propose a strategy that provides overarching direction for future efforts through the delineation of guiding principles, focus areas, new tools, available resources, and an evaluation of existing programs and staff capacity to implement more ambitious projects. This is different than drafting a plan which would lay out a specific workload or timeline for particular programs and endeavors. It provides the flexibility for the Council and staff to work to evaluate innovative ideas and prioritize their implementation based on cost analysis and funding availability, leveraging of partnerships, and staff capacity as opportunities arise and political will dictates.

As a first step in this process, 10 Guiding Principles were developed and organized into two areas of emphasis. Strategic Guidance principles address overall effort and process, and Action Area principles address key substantive aspects of initiatives.

### **STRATEGIC GUIDANCE:**

1. Sustainability will be a key factor in policy development
2. Lead by example and learn from others
3. Environmental quality, economic vitality, human health and social benefit are inter-related
4. Community education, participation and responsibility are key elements
5. Commitment to continuous improvement

### **ACTION AREAS:**

6. Manage expected growth in a sustainable way
7. Address impacts of past practices
8. Proactively manage and protect ecosystems
9. Improve and expand waste reduction and resource conservation programs
10. Energy solutions are key to reducing our carbon footprint

In order to further organize the subject matter into categories which could provide additional structure and continuity to the document, the consultant team of AHBL and O'Brien and Co. also categorized recommendations into different Focus Areas. These represent the areas in which the City can leverage its impact, influence and investment most efficiently and effectively:

- City operations, practices and outreach
- Energy conservation and carbon reduction
- Sustainable development and green infrastructure
- Waste reduction and resource conservation
- Ecosystem management and stewardship

These topics were rolled out for public discussion at a series of two open houses dubbed "Community Conversations." The first occurred on October 11, 2007, and featured a rotating series of short, focused and facilitated discussions. The second

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workshop took place on November 14, 2007, and centered on establishing priorities for implementation.

With public input in hand, the consultant and City staff teams set to drafting the actual document. The “Strategic Directions” section contains a more thorough discussion of the Focus Areas. Each category’s section includes a description of key issues and what the City is doing currently to address them; a brief description of recommendations, including what existing programs should be continued, expanded or modified; and summary diagrams that show key objectives, recommendations, targets and indicators and how they relate to each other.

It also begins with a list of ten key program strategies, which are also an example of the types of actions the City will commit itself to pursuing upon adoption of the Strategy, even though the specifics will be determined by existing, modified, or proposed processes. These Key Program Strategies are as follows:

1. Develop and integrate the sustainability program into all City functions
2. Develop a residential green building program
3. Build and support a sustainability leadership structure
4. Measure emissions in permitting and planning and take steps to mitigate
5. Prioritize non-motorized transportation investment and planning
6. Adopt a more aggressive green fleet policy
7. Adopt a clear and aggressive green building policy
8. Adopt a comprehensive environmental purchasing policy
9. Strengthen internal recycling efforts and community outreach
10. Structure and prioritize natural resources enhancement

This chapter also includes three graphic displays of “Green Infrastructure” opportunity - types, sites and a map - that represents geographic locations that attendees of the first Community Conversation marked as prospects for innovative projects.

The focus of the document then turns to implementation and introduces the Capacity Assessment

Matrix, a tool developed to analyze each of the fifty recommendations in terms of available financial and human resources, located in Appendix C. This methodology specifically considers initial cost premium, lifecycle cost savings, benefits, required staffing, operating budget impacts, capital budget impacts, internal responsibility, external responsibility, available external resources and whether the action is required to meet an existing agreement.

The Strategy then details the fourteen Priority Recommendations that the consultants viewed as “easy wins” and ways to leverage current City efforts or achieve results using existing resources in new ways. Of these priorities, the first six are new recommendations, many of which are important initial steps that must be taken if the City is to establish baselines by which to benchmark its progress towards increased sustainability. The last eight are continuations or expansions of existing programs or initiatives. Each Priority Recommendation includes a discussion of why it is a priority as well as implementation considerations.

The body of the document concludes with Implementation Resources, including funding, regulations and policy planning, as well as opportunities for business partnerships. The appendices then delve into more depth by presenting analyses of many aspects that will be necessary to achieve goals. While the body of the document is written for general public consumption, the appendices will be most helpful to elected and appointed officials and staff as they begin the work of integrating sustainability into their established processes and programs.

Overall, the Strategy is organized so that chapters could stand alone and be understood without reading the document as a whole. As a result, there is some redundancy as the big picture relationships and comprehensive nature of environmental sustainability are interwoven. It is also intended to be read by a wide spectrum of people with varying knowledge of sustainability and municipal issues, from the Council members who will ultimately make many decisions to residents who are interested in becoming part of the larger solution to many of the threats that loom on the horizon, like climate change, deteriorating water quality and habitat loss. One goal of the Strategy is that it may be a call to action and provide inspired direction to all.

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The appendices are summarized below:

- A:** Of the 50 Sustainability Recommendations listed in this appendix, 27 of them are current programs. The consultant team's notes are included for additional clarification.
- B:** The Existing Program Summary Matrix contained here details these ongoing efforts and provides direction as to whether the City should ensure their continuation, modify the overall approach or expand current efforts.
- C:** The Capacity Assessment Matrix is another tool to evaluate existing capacity to implement recommendations through examination of a number of benefit, finance and human resource factors.
- D:** The Low Impact Development and Green Building Code Assessment is a thorough look at existing codes dealing with these topics, a description of their intent and a gap analysis.
- E:** The Sustainable Decision-Making Tool delineates a four-step process by which staff may identify or distill a potential action or decision, make an initial qualitative evaluation and comparison, perform a brief SWOT (strength, weakness, opportunity, threat) analysis and a preliminary cost and resource evaluation. This will allow for comparison of alternatives, as well as indicate which recommendations should be pursued for further analysis, tabled until more information or resources become available or rejected as infeasible.
- F:** This list of twenty-eight indicators, which may be used to establish a baseline for City operations and existing conditions, is organized by Focus Area. These would enable the City to track progress towards sustainability over time to gauge how successful its initiatives have been at achieving their intended goals. Indicators would measure data for both internal City operations and the greater Shoreline community.
- G:** Implementation Tools is a more complete guide to resources available for municipalities, to assist them in their quest to become more sustainable, energy efficient and environmentally proactive.

