



# MEMORANDUM

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Action  
 Discussion  
 Information

**DATE:** January 16, 2020  
**TO:** Environmental Services Commission  
**FROM:** Jennifer Ewing, Environmental Stewardship Program Manager  
**SUBJECT:** Environmental Stewardship Plan Update

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## **Action Required at this Time**

This presentation is for information and discussion only. No action is requested at this time.

This presentation is for information only to introduce the Environmental Stewardship Plan and the relevant issues for the Environmental Services Commission consideration. Staff have initiated the process to update the plan and have received direction from Council to engage with Boards and Commissions for input on the plan, with the goal of Council adoption of the plan. Staff will return to the ESC later in the spring with draft strategies for feedback and discussion with the Commission.

## **Fiscal Impact**

The 2019-2020 City of Bellevue budget includes \$310,000 to support the update of the environmental Stewardship Plan in 2019 and the subsequent implementation of the plan starting in 2020.

In Phase 2 of the planning process, as part of the strategy development and implementation planning, staff will analyze impacts and cost implications of possible strategies.

## **Policy Issues**

The updated Environmental Stewardship Plan will support the implementation of several environmental policies, as outlined below. The plan update also responds to Council's 2018-2020 priority #11 to review progress of the Environmental Stewardship Initiative (ESI) and analyze additional steps that the city may take to achieve environmental goals (e.g., tree canopy).

The updated Environmental Stewardship Plan will seek to further the implementation of the following policies:

### *Bellevue Comprehensive Plan, Environment Element:*

The following policies in the Comprehensive Plan's Environment Element drive ESI's work.

- Promote and invest in energy efficiency and renewable energy resources as an alternative to non-renewable resources. (EN-4)

- Establish an achievable Citywide target and take corrective actions to reduce greenhouse gas emissions such as reducing energy consumption and vehicle emissions and enhancing land use patterns to reduce vehicle dependency. (EN-6)
- Provide regional leadership on environmental issues that extend beyond Bellevue's boundaries and require regional cooperation. (EN-8)
- Educate the public about environmental issues and illustrate how individual actions can have a cumulative effect to benefit the environment. (EN-9)
- Work toward a Citywide tree canopy target of at least 40 percent canopy coverage that reflects our "City in a Park" character and maintain an action plan for meeting the target across multiple land use types including right-of way, public lands, and residential and commercial uses. (EN-12)
- Reduce waste, reuse and recycle materials, and dispose of all wastes in a safe and environmentally responsible manner. (EN-14)
- Prioritize the use of products that are recyclable and made from recycled materials, or have other environmental attributes throughout their lifecycle. (EN-15)
- Work with residents, businesses, and waste haulers to continue to improve percentage of waste diverted from landfill. (EN-17)
- Implement the city-wide use of low impact development techniques and green building practices. (EN-45)
- Make low impact development the preferred and commonly-used approach to site development to minimize impervious surfaces, native vegetation loss, and stormwater runoff. (EN-46)
- Manage aquatic habitats, including shoreline and riparian (streamside) habitats, to preserve and enhance their natural functions of providing fish and wildlife habitat and protecting water quality. (EN-64)

*Bellevue Comprehensive Plan, Utilities Element:*

- Promote the recycling of solid waste materials by providing opportunities for convenient recycling and by developing educational materials on recycling, composting, and other waste reduction methods. (UT-24)

*Discussion: Waste reduction and source separation are the city's preferred strategies for managing solid waste. Materials remaining after effective waste reduction and source separation should be handled in accordance with the King County Solid Waste Plan.*

- Encourage and actively seek an effective regional approach to solid waste management. (UT-27)
- Maintain a safe, cost-effective and responsive solid waste collection system that provides convenient, efficient, environmentally-friendly and visually unobtrusive components and services. (UT-25)

*King County Comprehensive Solid Waste Management Plan, 2019*

The Bellevue City Council approved the King County Comprehensive Solid Waste Management Plan in June of 2019, which has since been finalized through its approval by the Department of Ecology. This plan includes countywide waste reduction and recycling goals, including achieving an interim recycling rate of 70% and Zero Waste of Resources with economic value by 2030.

*Mayors' Climate Protection Agreement (Res. 7517)*

Council agreed in February 2006 to strive to meet or exceed the Kyoto Protocol greenhouse gas emissions reductions targets (7 percent below 1990 levels by 2012) for reducing global warming pollution by taking actions in City operations and similar actions within our community.

*King County Cities Climate Collaboration (Res. 8789)*

Council joined the King County Cities Climate Collaboration (K4C) on August 4, 2014. The K4C is a partnership among 17 partners and King County, working collaboratively to achieve greenhouse gas emission reductions consistent with Countywide Planning Policies.

*King County Countywide Planning Policies (CPP), Environmental Element*

Reduce countywide sources of greenhouse gas emissions, compared to a 2007 baseline, by 25 percent by 2020, 50 percent by 2030, and 80 percent by 2050. Assuming 1 percent annual population growth, these targets translate to per capita emissions of approximately 8.5 metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalent (MTCO<sub>2e</sub>) by 2020, 5 MTCO<sub>2e</sub>, and 1.5 MTCO<sub>2e</sub> by 2050 (CPP EN-18).

**Background**

The Environmental Stewardship Initiative (ESI) formally began in 2007 with a mission to implement continuous change, learning and innovation in practices that drive the organization and the larger Bellevue community toward achieving the ESI vision. Over the last five years, the ESI's work has been guided by the 2013-2018 ESI Strategic Plan. This plan contains 57 actions related to greenhouse gas emissions, energy and water, mobility and land use, ecosystems and open space, and materials management and waste, addressing our municipal operations and the community as a whole.

City Council's 2018-2020 Vision Priorities include Priority #11 related to the ESI. It states: "Review the progress of the Environmental Stewardship Initiative and analyze additional steps that the City may wish to take to achieve its environmental goals (e.g. tree canopy)". The 2013-2018 ESI Strategic Plan is being updated in direct response to Priority #11, and the new plan is referred to as the Environmental Stewardship Plan.

**Environmental Stewardship Plan Update**

On November 13, 2018, staff presented to the Council the scope and approach for updating the 2013-2018 ESI Strategic Plan, along with the main focus areas for the plan. These include: climate change; energy; materials management and waste; mobility and land use; and natural systems. The updated Environmental Stewardship Plan will build on the previous plan and existing efforts and will be an action-oriented plan aimed at implementing existing environmental policies. Council agreed with the proposed scope and schedule for the plan update. Through the plan update process, opportunities for new or updated goals and targets have been identified for discussion and direction by the Council.

The following steps outline the City's approach to the update:

Phase 1:

- Review progress with the ESI Strategic Plan Progress report (completed)
- Review the city's environmental goals and update as appropriate (May 20, 2019 Council presentation)
- Develop targets for each goal (November 12, 2019 Council presentation)

Phase 2:

- Analyze best practices and additional actions for consideration in an updated Environmental Stewardship Plan
- Engage with Boards and Commissions for input on possible strategies and actions related to their purview
- Engage with residents, businesses, and key stakeholders on possible actions for the plan

Phase 3:

- Develop a draft Environmental Stewardship Plan for public comment
- Finalize Environmental Stewardship Plan for adoption by the Council

On February 19<sup>th</sup> staff presented to the Council on the city's progress towards achieving environmental goals and implementation of the 2013-2018 ESI Strategic Plan. A key takeaway was that the City of Bellevue's environmental goals are a mix of short-term and long-term goals, aspirational and achievable goals, measurable and qualitative goals, and goals from other Council adopted plans or strategic plans. In this presentation, Council was supportive of staff performing a review of the City's environmental goals and returning with options for updated goals and targets. On May 20<sup>th</sup>, staff presented to the Council on the updated goals and example targets for each focus area of the plan, and on November 12<sup>th</sup>, staff presented the recommended goals and targets for the plan for both the entire city and Bellevue's municipal operations.

To develop the recommended goals and targets for the plan, the staff team reviewed best practices, peer cities, and undertook an initial phase of public outreach with an online survey, community workshop, a workshop with sustainability leaders and stakeholders, and six pop-up events around the city. The team also analyzed progress to date, forecasted trends, and the impact of any regional or statewide policies and efforts.

Based on this research, analysis, and community engagement, staff organized the proposed environmental goals and targets into three categories:

- ▶ **Stretch** targets aim to place Bellevue on a slightly more aggressive path than historic and current trends.
- ▶ **Bold** targets are more ambitious than Bellevue's current pathway. They are consistent with many peer cities as well as with best practices.
- ▶ **Leading edge** targets are the most ambitious option and would align Bellevue with the most advanced cities around the world acting on climate change and sustainability.

## **Council Input on the Environmental Stewardship Plan**

On February 19<sup>th</sup> and May 20<sup>th</sup>, the Council provided input to staff that they would like the city to take a step forward in its environmental efforts and to lead by example through municipal operations. Council reiterated the importance of setting goals and was interested in comparing our commitments to best practices and peer communities.

Staff recommended targets which aligned with the “Bold” level of ambition, which Council supported. However, Council requested staff to consider revising some of the targets to align with the “Leading Edge” level of ambition.

The recommended targets, which align with the “Bold” level of ambition, are outlined in the following section.

## **Recommended Communitywide Goals and Targets**

The recommended communitywide goals and targets for Bellevue are summarized below. These long-term aspirational targets will provide the framework for the Environmental Stewardship Plan, and serve to integrate all of Bellevue’s overarching environmental aspirations and goals into one plan. These recommended targets are considered aspirational, and non-compulsory in nature, and they will be used to track progress over time. The target year is 2050 for communitywide goals, unless otherwise noted. Interim targets will also be developed as part of the action development process.

Also, as staff work to develop the strategies and actions for the plan, there may be an opportunity to adjust targets to achieve more or less ambitious goals based on the types of strategies developed and the level of effort required for implementation.

## **Communitywide Goal and Target Recommendations**

### **Climate Change**

- **Goal:** Reduce Bellevue’s greenhouse gas emissions and prepare and adapt to ongoing climate change impacts.
- **Target:** Reduce Bellevue’s communitywide greenhouse gas emissions 80 percent by 2050, compared to a 2011 baseline.

### **Natural Systems**

- **Goal:** Improve and preserve the integrity and health of Bellevue’s natural systems and ensure all of Bellevue’s residents have access to Bellevue’s abundant natural resources.
- **Targets:**
  - Achieve a 40 percent citywide tree canopy by 2050, (increasing from a 37% citywide tree canopy in 2017).
  - Ensure that 100 percent<sup>1</sup> of Bellevue’s residents live within 1/3 of a mile to a park, open space, or trail by 2050 (increasing from the current target of 72%).

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<sup>1</sup> Staff originally recommended that 90 percent of residents live within a 1/3 of a mile of a park, open space, or trail head at the November 12<sup>th</sup> Council presentation. However, based on direction from Council to consider increasing some targets to “leading edge”, staff now recommend a 100 percent target.

- Maintain and improve the health of Bellevue's streams<sup>2</sup>.

### **Materials Management and Waste**

- **Goal:** Reduce the negative impacts from consumption and waste practices and strive towards Zero Waste of Resources.
- **Target:** Achieve Zero Waste of Resources by 2050.

### **Mobility & Land Use**

- **Goal:** Minimize the environmental impacts of transportation and development in Bellevue by focusing development in growth centers and providing all residents with access to a variety of mobility options.
- **Targets:**
  - Achieve a 45 percent commute-trip drive-alone rate for residents and people working in Bellevue by 2050.
  - Strive to have 50 percent electric vehicles registered in Bellevue by 2050.
  - Reduce per capita vehicle miles travelled (VMT) by 50 percent by 2050, compared to a 2011 baseline.
  - Support transit oriented development and strive to achieve 85 percent of jobs and 65 percent of housing located with a ¼ mile of frequent transit (every 15 minutes or less) by 2050.

### **Energy**

- **Goal:** Ensure long-term access to clean energy while reducing the fiscal and environmental impacts of consumption.
- **Target:**
  - Achieve 100 percent renewable energy by 2045.
  - Reduce energy use by 30 percent by 2050, compared to a 2011 baseline.

Staff have also developed a suite of municipal operations goals and targets which generally mirror the communitywide targets, although they have a more aggressive timeline of 2040, following Council's direction of leading by example with Bellevue's municipal operations.

### **Council Direction for Boards and Commissions**

At the November 12<sup>th</sup> Council presentation, Council provided direction for staff to engage with the Boards and Commissions for input on strategies and actions to achieve the goals in the plan. No formal action is needed from the Boards and Commissions during this process. However, some of the goals, targets, or strategies in the plan may require further engagement with Boards and Commissions, such as through the update to the Utilities Strategic Plan.

The ESI Core Team has identified the following policy issues related to the Boards and Commissions outlined below:

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<sup>2</sup> A target for stream health will be recommended in 2020, as part of the Watershed Management Plan currently under development.

- **Environmental Services Commission:** Strategies for increasing recycling and waste diversion, increasing low impact development and stormwater management best management practices.
- **Parks and Community Services Board:** Tree canopy assessment and forest health assessment and restoration in Bellevue's parks, and long-term strategies for achieving the parks access goal.
- **Transportation Commission:** Strategies for reducing greenhouse gas emissions from transportation through cleaner vehicles, cleaner fuels, and reducing vehicle miles traveled.
- **Planning Commission:** Relationship between the updated Environmental Stewardship Plan and the Comprehensive Plan, and implementation of tree canopy, low impact development, and green building policies.
- **Bellevue Diversity Advantage Network:** Engaging with diverse communities and understanding any environmental concerns from Bellevue's historically underserved communities

Engagement with Boards and Commissions will support the advancement of existing policies from the Comprehensive Plan and other functional plans and may involve discussion of potential new policies to support the achievement of the Environmental Stewardship Plan goals and targets.

### **Analysis of Current State and Possible Strategies Related to Bellevue Utilities**

Bellevue's overall communitywide recycling rate for contracted services was 39.7% in 2018. This is comprised of single-family households with a high recycling rate of 64.3% (Republic Services only), and a combined of commercial and multi-family recycling rate of 22.3% for properties contracted with Republic Services for solid waste collection.

Approximately 59% of all waste in Bellevue is from commercial and multi-family customers, and 41% from single-family households. With most job and population growth in Bellevue planned to occur in Bellevue's growth centers, this will continue to increase the percent of waste from multi-family and commercial customers, which is currently recycled at approximately 22%.

Staff will evaluate strategies to increase multi-family and commercial recycling, reduce construction and demolition waste, and reduce single-use plastics waste, among other possible strategies.

Staff are currently evaluating possible metrics to measure low impact development. As of the last tree canopy assessment, 40% of Bellevue is covered with impervious surfaces. Staff are evaluating other possible ways of tracking low impact development, habitat preservation, and water quality as part of the Watershed Management plan.

### **Discussion for Environmental Services Commission**

Staff have outlined several questions for discussion for the Environmental Services Commission below:

- Would the Environmental Services Commission like to suggest any strategies or actions for consideration in the benefit cost analysis and public outreach?
- What are the greatest areas of opportunity for increasing recycling and organics collection? And for increasing the benefits of low impact development?

**NEXT STEPS**

Staff are beginning the process of engaging with Boards and Commissions and analyzing possible strategies to achieve Bellevue's environmental goals. Staff will refine the list of possible strategies and perform a cost benefit analysis of shorter list of strategies, to identify actions with the greatest environmental impact. In parallel to this analysis, staff will initiate a second round of public outreach and engagement with residents, stakeholders, and the business community to gauge support for various strategies.

Staff will return to the Boards and Commissions later in the spring with the results of this analysis and outreach, to request input from the Boards and Commissions on the short-listed actions for the plan. The input from the Boards and Commissions will be summarized as part of the outreach and engagement process and incorporated into the plan.

**ATTACHMENTS**

- A. Attachment A Recommended Goals and Targets Report
- B. Attachment B Environmental Stewardship Plan Update Phase 1 Outreach Summary

**REFERENCE MATERIALS**

- A. 2013-2018 ESI Strategic Plan
- B. ESI Strategic Plan Progress Report