



DATE: January 7, 2020

TO: Parks & Community Services Board

FROM: Jennifer Ewing, Environmental Services Program Manager
Community Development Department

SUBJECT: Environmental Stewardship Plan update
Informational, no Board action requested

OVERVIEW

This presentation will introduce the Environmental Stewardship Plan and relevant issues for Parks & Community Services Board consideration. Staff have initiated the process to update the plan and have received direction from City 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 Parks & Community Services Board later this year with draft strategies for the plan, for feedback and discussion with the Board.

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.

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. As presented on November 13, 2018, 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. 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 (February 19, 2019 Council presentation)
- 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 staff presented to the Council on the city's progress towards achieving the environmental goals 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, staff presented to the Council on the updated goals and example targets for each focus area of the plan, and on November 12th, staff presented the recommended goals and targets for the plan for both the entire city and Bellevue's municipal operations. On February 19 and May 20, Council provided input to staff that they would like the city to take a step forward in its environmental efforts and lead by example through municipal operations.

To develop the recommended goals and targets for the plan, the staff team reviewed best practices and 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, the potential targets were then organized into three levels of ambition:

- ▶ **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.

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

COUNCIL DIRECTION FOR BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS

At the November 12th Council presentation, Council provided direction for staff to engage with city 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 Environmental Stewardship Plan will influence recommendations in existing plans that board and commissions may have purview over, for example the Parks & Open Space System Plan.

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

- Parks & Community Services Board: Tree canopy and forest health assessment in Bellevue’s parks, and long-term strategies for achieving the park and open space access goal.
- Environmental Services Commission: Strategies for increasing recycling and waste diversion, increasing low-impact development and stormwater management best management practices.
- 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 progress toward achieving tree canopy goal and green building goals.
- Bellevue Diversity Advantage Network: Engaging with diverse communities and understanding any environmental concerns from Bellevue’s historically underrepresented communities

The 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.

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 not mandatory 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 percent¹ of Bellevue’s residents live within 1/3 of a mile of a park, open space, or trail access point by 2050 (increasing from 73% of households in 2018).
 - Maintain and improve the health of Bellevue’s streams.²

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 within 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.

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

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

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

DISCUSSION FOR PARKS & COMMUNITY SERVICES BOARD

Staff are seeking input from the Board on the Communitywide Goal and Target Recommendations above. In addition, staff would like Board feedback on the following questions:

- Sustainability and stewardship are common themes in programming in Bellevue's parks. Are there any additional opportunities through Bellevue's Parks & Community Services programs to support the achievement of Bellevue's environmental goals?
- Would the Parks & Community Services Board like to suggest any strategies or actions for consideration as we move into phase 2 of the planning process?

An additional consideration for the Park & Community Service Board discussion relates to the city's 40% tree canopy goal. Bellevue's parks and open space system is already at a 65% tree canopy, which limits significant opportunities for canopy growth in Bellevue's parks. To increase the overall canopy percentage, the City will need to identify opportunities for increasing Bellevue's tree canopy on private property and in the right-of-way. In addition to increasing canopy, preserving the city's existing canopy is also critical to achieving the goal, and the Parks Department Natural Resources Division works to maintain and restore Bellevue's forested areas in the city's parks to ensure the long-term health of the city's urban forest.

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 a 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 this year with the results of this analysis and outreach, to request input on the short-listed actions for the plan. The input from 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:

[https://bellevuewa.gov/sites/default/files/media/pdf_document/ESI Strategic Plan 2013-2018 FINAL Dec2013.pdf](https://bellevuewa.gov/sites/default/files/media/pdf_document/ESI_Strategic_Plan_2013-2018_FINAL_Dec2013.pdf)

B. ESI Strategic Plan Progress Report:

https://bellevuewa.gov/sites/default/files/media/pdf_document/ESI%20Strategic%20Plan%20Progress%20Report%20FINAL.pdf