

CITY COUNCIL STUDY SESSION

Environmental Stewardship Initiative Quarterly Update

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DIRECTION NEEDED FROM COUNCIL

INFORMATION ONLY Tonight's Study Session will provide Council with an update on progress toward implementing the Sustainable Bellevue Environmental Stewardship Plan.

RECOMMENDATION

N/A

BACKGROUND & ANALYSIS

This presentation is the second of the 2022 quarterly Council updates on the implementation of the Sustainable Bellevue Environmental Stewardship Plan. Staff last presented to Council on February 7 with an update on plan implementation progress and overview of the 2022 Environmental Stewardship Initiative (ESI) workplan. This presentation will provide an update on plan implementation progress, with a focus on actions involving collaboration and partnerships.

Background

The 2021-2023 Council Vision & Priorities includes Priority #8: Implement the Environmental Stewardship Plan, which identifies actions in five focus areas:

- Climate change
- Energy
- Materials management and waste
- Mobility and land use
- Natural systems.

The 2021-2025 Environmental Stewardship Plan includes environmental goals and targets for 2030 and 2050, for both the community and City operations. The plan consists of a suite of actions aimed to improve the environment in five focus areas: climate change, energy, mobility and land use, natural systems, and materials management and waste. The 77 actions in the plan are designed to help achieve the City's environmental goals to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, energy use, and vehicle miles travelled per person and increase recycling, tree canopy, walkable access to parks, renewable energy, and electric vehicle use. The municipal operations section of the plan maps out how the City will continue to lead by example, in areas such as buying renewable energy, increasing energy

efficiency at City facilities, and greening the City's fleet. The plan will help to preserve and enhance the natural environment, encourage transit-oriented development, and increase overall livability in Bellevue.

Council Direction

As part of the adoption of the Sustainable Bellevue Plan on December 14, 2020, Council directed staff to provide quarterly updates on plan implementation progress. Council directed staff to pursue and build partnerships to support the plan implementation, leverage the expertise of stakeholders and residents, seek innovative solutions and quick wins, lead by example, and move forward with urgency into plan implementation. In the adopted 2021-2022 City budget, Council included funding for enhanced engagement with stakeholders and residents, to support the plan implementation, along with supplemental funding for “quick wins” for the plan implementation. As part of the quarterly updates, staff will provide annual reporting on the environmental performance metrics during the summer update, and the other quarterly updates will focus on progress towards implementing actions.

Progress Report

The Environmental Stewardship Plan covers a five-year implementation period from 2021-2025. Of the 77 actions in the Environmental Stewardship Plan, the primary departments working on the plan implementation (Community Development, Finance and Asset Management, Development Services, Parks & Community Services, Transportation, and Utilities) have initiated on 30 of the actions and incorporated 24 of the actions into ongoing operations. Twenty-one actions have not started yet, and three actions are complete, as shown in Table 1 and Attachment A: Sustainable Bellevue Plan Implementation Progress April 2022.

Table 1: Summary of Environmental Stewardship Plan Implementation Progress

Status	# of Actions	Description	%
Started	30	Work has started / implementation is partially complete	39%
Ongoing	24	Work has been incorporated into ongoing operations	31%
Complete	3	Work has been completed	4%
Not started	20	Work has not begun	27%
Barrier	0	Need to re-strategize approach. There is a barrier to implementing the action.	0%
Total	77		

Since the last Council update on February 7, the departments charged with implementing the plan have started one new action, M1.2 to use the “15-Minute City Concept” in our long-range planning and made progress on the following actions from the Sustainable Bellevue Plan outlined below. The next Council update in July will include an update on the 2021 greenhouse gas emissions inventory and other environmental performance measures.

Accomplishments

The key accomplishments from the last quarter, January 2022 – March 2022, include:

Community Actions:

- *Clean Buildings Act Technical Support program:* After launching the program in December 2021, the team held two webinars, enrolled 92 buildings in the program and completed 53 energy benchmarks. The team has completed four building scoping assessments to date and is assisting three buildings in applying for WA State Department of Commerce Clean Buildings Act Early Adopter Incentives.
- *Home Energy Retrofit program:* The City of Bellevue will partner with the cities of Kirkland, Redmond, Issaquah, and Mercer Island in the development of a heat pump campaign to accelerate the adoption of energy efficient heat pumps. The five cities will work with Spark Northwest as the program administrator and are working on developing partnerships with Imagine Housing for affordable housing retrofits and Hopelink, to provide support in distributing incentive funds for qualifying low- and moderate-income residents.
- *Community Climate Challenge:* Staff are working on developing a Sustainable Bellevue Climate Challenge, in collaboration with the cities of Redmond, Issaquah, and Mercer Island, to engage residents in taking action to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions. The new climate challenge website and campaign is planned to launch on Earth Day, April 22.
- *Air Quality and Planning Guidelines project:* This project was initiated in January and will involve a review of research related to air quality, public health, and land use, along with local studies and data, to provide best practice recommendations for consideration for long-term planning for areas near freeways.
- *Enhanced Engagement:* Convened the Sustainability Leaders Group in November 2021 and held working group meetings on urban forestry, commercial energy efficiency, and residential energy efficiency, to support the development and implementation of urban forestry actions, Clean Buildings Incentive Program, and Home Energy Retrofit program outlined in the Sustainable Bellevue Plan. Held a Community Townhall in January to update residents on progress in 2021 and plans for 2022.
- *Tree Canopy:* Developing a 2019 and 2021 Tree Canopy Assessment using a new online tool from PlanIT Geo. Reprioritized land use code projects to initiate tree regulation update initiative in the third quarter of 2022. Planning for the fall Trees for Bellevue tree giveaway, with a goal of distributing 1000 trees. Providing support for the 300 Trees spring tree giveaway, which related in the distribution of 1000 trees.
- *Mobility Implementation Plan:* The Mobility Implementation Plan was approved by the Transportation Commission on March 10 and transmitted to Council in April for adoption.
- *Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure:* Preparing a grant application for the WA Department (WSDOT) of Transportation Electric Zero-Emissions Vehicle Infrastructure Partnerships funding opportunity, to seek funding for a publicly accessible high-speed charger to support WSDOT's goal of building out a high-speed charging network through the state.

Municipal Operations:

- *Green Fleet Strategy*: Completed analysis of alternatives and developed final Green Fleet Strategy. Developing a long-range path to meet fleet electrification targets by 2030, including essential infrastructure to support electric vehicle charging.
- *Energy retrofits and Clean Buildings Act*: Performing facility audits and developing energy efficiency retrofit plans for city facilities to comply with the Clean Buildings Act, which will now apply to buildings 20,000 square feet and larger.
- *Community solar*: As a result of Bellevue's community solar application, the South Bellevue Community Center was selected by Puget Sound Energy (PSE) as a possible site host for PSE's Community Solar program. PSE will perform further feasibility analysis to determine the suitability of the facility and location.

Other Updates

Puget Sound Energy (PSE) was required to make changes to the cost methodology to its Green Direct program, which the City entered into in 2016. These changes were required after the Utilities and Transportation Commission (UTC) approved a settlement to resolve a 2020 power rate case, which did not involve the City. Specifically, PSE was required to reduce the energy charge credit, which will likely result in increased rates for all Green Direct subscribers.

As part of the settlement, the UTC directed PSE to convene a work group to help develop a recommendation for a durable calculation for the Green Direct energy charge credit. Since October 2021, Staff regularly met with PSE, Green Direct Subscribers (which include 15 other government agencies), and other PSE customer to develop a rate design methodology mutually acceptable to work group participants. Unfortunately, these meetings failed to settle on a recommended methodology acceptable to all. At issue is the technical approach for accounting for total costs and benefits of renewable energy.

PSE has filed a new general rate case (dated 1/31/2022). This rate case will take approximately 11 months to go through the UTC's review/approval process, and it will revisit the durable calculation for the Green Direct energy charge credit. Staff will continue to monitor this matter and will provide future updates as to the methodology approved by the UTC and its impact on Green Direct subscribers.

POLICY & FISCAL IMPACTS

Policy Impact

2021-2025 Environmental Stewardship Plan, (Res. 9859, 2020)

- The Environmental Stewardship Plan was adopted on December 14, 2020 and includes updated environmental goals and targets and 77 actions for implementation over a five-year period, 2021-2025.

Bellevue City Council Vision and Priorities (2021-2023)

- Priority #8: Implement the Environmental Stewardship Plan, which identifies actions in five focus areas:
 - Climate change
 - Energy

- Materials management and waste
- Mobility and land use
- Natural systems

Bellevue Comprehensive Plan Climate Change Policies (2015)

- EN-6. 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-7. Develop and implement climate change adaptation strategies that create a more resilient community by addressing the impacts of climate change to public health and safety, the economy, public and private infrastructure, water resources, and habitat.
- EN-8. Provide regional leadership on environmental issues that extend beyond Bellevue’s boundaries and require regional cooperation.
- TR-136. Support means to reduce transportation-source greenhouse gas emissions.

King County Cities Climate Collaboration (Res. 8789, 2014)

- Council joined the King County Cities Climate Collaboration (K4C) on August 4, 2014, by signing an Interlocal Agreement (Resolution 8798). K4C is a partnership among cities across King County working to achieve greenhouse gas emission reductions consistent with Countywide Planning Policies.

K4C Joint Commitments (February 17, 2015 and September 14, 2020)

- Council voted to sign the original K4C Joint Commitments on February 17, 2015; and to sign the updated K4C Joint Commitments on September 14, 2020, to reaffirm Bellevue’s participation in the K4C and support for the regional countywide greenhouse gas emissions reduction goals.

Fiscal Impact

The adopted 2021-2022 City Budget includes \$250,000 for 2021 and 2022 to implement the Environmental Stewardship Plan, \$125,000 per year from 2023-2027 (CD-46), and \$50,000 over the two years for enhanced engagement from the Council Contingency fund. There are also complementary resources in other departments beyond Community Development (i.e. Finance and Asset Management, Development Services, Parks & Community Services, Transportation, and Utilities) that directly implement sustainability actions in the plan.

OPTIONS

N/A

ATTACHMENTS & AVAILABLE DOCUMENTS

A. Sustainable Bellevue Plan Implementation Progress April 2022

AVAILABLE IN COUNCIL LIBRARY

Environmental Stewardship Plan, 2021-2025